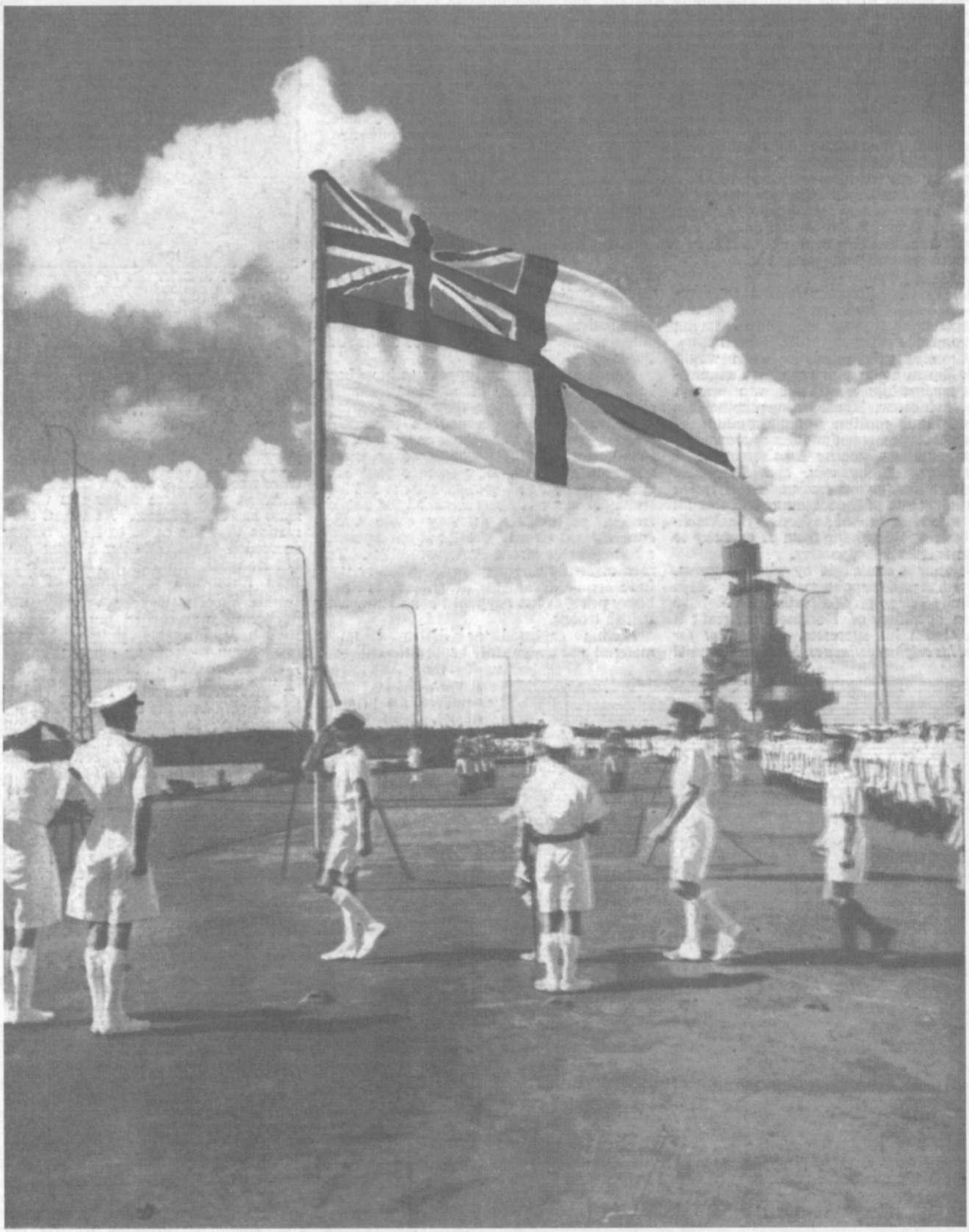
Vol 6 **The War Illustrated** N° 150

Edited by Sir John Hammerton

SIXPENCE MARCH 19, 1943



H.M.S. ILLUSTRIOUS, one of Britain's most famous aircraft-carriers, has taken a leading part in many thrilling actions, notably at Taranto in 1940. In 1941 she beat off nearly 100 enemy planes which attacked her in the Sicilian Channel (see Vol. 4, p. 108). This photograph shows Capt. R. L. B. Cuncliffe, R.N., taking the salute during Sunday divisions on the flight deck. In the centre is the lift trap through which aircraft are hoisted from their hangars.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

NO. 151 WILL BE PUBLISHED FRIDAY, APRIL 2

THE BATTLE FRONTS

by Maj.-Gen. Sir Charles Gwynn, K.C.B., D.S.O.

THE period under review (the second half of February) was marked by fluctuations of fortune rather than by steady progress; and, writing on the last day of the month, it is impossible to assess positively the effect of gains and losses. In Russia the period opened with the brilliant capture of Kharkov, and it was followed by the renewal of the advance from Lozovaya towards Dnepropetrovsk. These successes, coming on top of the great victories earlier in the month, tended to excite undue expectations of further rapid progress. When, therefore, towards the end of the month, German resistance stiffened and Moscow had no sensational advances to announce, some disappointment was felt—no doubt accentuated by Rommel's initial success in Tunisia.

Actually, the Russian situation, though in places somewhat obscure, seems at the time of writing as satisfactory as could be expected, making due allowance for unfavourable weather and for the difficulty of maintaining uniformly the impetus of a great offensive movement. The factors that must be considered are analysed in more detail below.

In Tunisia it cannot be denied that Rommel, taking advantage of his interior lines position, inflicted a heavy reverse on the Allies. Fortunately, he would seem again to have been lured by success into attempting more than his resources justified, and he has paid a heavy penalty for vaulting ambition. It remains to be seen, however, which side has gained most in the exchanges. Below I have given my reasons for believing that on the balance the advantage rests with the Allies, although it would certainly be premature to claim an outstanding success.

TUNISIA

Some readers may remember that in page 547 I suggested that Rommel, while delaying Montgomery's advance to the Mareth Line, might receive reinforcements which would enable him to make a characteristic counter-stroke against the Americans who were a menace to his rear. The delaying potentialities of the Mareth position and the mobility of Rommel's force seemed to offer opportunities for exploiting an interior lines situation. I did not expect, however, that he would attempt a major operation against the communications of the 1st Army and that his object would be limited to forcing the Americans back and depriving them of capacity to cooperate with Montgomery.

This view is confirmed by what Sertorius, the German radio spokesman, is reported, in The Daily Telegraph of February 27, to have said in speaking of Rommel's retreat; it reads, "with his successes, *which went far beyond his original estimates*, Marshal Rommel can be content. Any attempt to expand further would have required *far larger forces* than had been foreseen for these operations in the general plan for the defence of the Axis Tunisian bridgehead."

The American troops appear to have been holding a wide front in no great strength; and it is not surprising that their positions were penetrated by Rommel's formidable assault. Through lack of war experience, and also because of the necessity of protecting advanced air-fields, their defence may have been over-rigid and counter-attacks fell into traps. It was a difficult situation for untried troops, particularly as they came under concentrated air attack without having much air support or strong A.A. protection. The men evidently displayed great gallantry, and have acquired valuable experience, but at a heavy price, as has happened before now with British troops.

Having captured or destroyed much material and temporarily broken the cohesion of the Americans, Rommel had certainly achieved his primary object, even to the extent of depriving the Allies of important aerodromes. But he was tempted by the magnitude of his success to exploit it beyond the limitations of his resources. It was repetition of his attempt to reach Alexandria in his pursuit of the 8th Army, but this time possibly with less justification. For if he really tried to attack the main communications of the 1st Army, General Anderson had stronger reserves to meet him than Auchinleck had at Alexandria. Moreover, the 8th Army remained a menace to his defensive force on the Mareth position.

I can hardly believe that he hoped to do more than to disturb the dispositions of the 1st Army and to extend the area of destruction of its advanced depots. Nemesis was slow in overtaking him at El Alamein; this time it came quicker, but probably less decisively.

TUNISIAN WAR ZONE. Allied recapture of the Kasserine Pass by Feb. 23, 1943 frustrated enemy attempts to capture Tebessa. This map shows the Allied line at Feb. 26. The arrow marks a heavy drive against the Mareth defences by the 8th Army.

By courtesy of The Times

GERMAN SPOILS left by the enemy in his retreat on the Soviet front included a huge quantity of war materials. This Red Army man examines arms and ammunition.

Photo, Planet News

An American correspondent (Mr. William Stoneman, in The Daily Telegraph of Feb. 27) gives General Alexander the credit for the speed and vigour of the counter-stroke at Thala. He writes, "The position of our forces was at danger-point when General Alexander instilled 'attack' rather than 'retreat' spirit into them." Be that as it may, there was evidently for two days a dangerous situation with fierce fighting in which both sides had heavy losses. As I read the information that has come to hand, neither side succeeded in establishing a clear mastery; but Rommel, realizing that his weakened and tired force had no chance of achieving further success, decided on retreat—which apparently was carried out in good order, though it probably suffered considerable losses from vigorous air pursuit.

THE question of the moment is, How far will Rommel retreat? Personally I believe he will withdraw the bulk of his striking force right away, to reorganize and re-equip in readiness to deal with Montgomery's advance; and, trusting to having robbed the Americans for the time being of much of their offensive power, will leave only rearguards to hold them in check, probably on the line from which his offensive started.

Rommel has been roughly handled, but it may not take him long to make good his losses. Losses of personnel can probably be replaced quickly by air transport; but much depends on how far the Axis have been able to build up a reserve of tanks and motor vehicles. Captured vehicles might be used to make good temporary deficiencies. It would be a mistake, therefore, to assume from the speed of his withdrawal that Rommel has suffered a crushing defeat.

Meantime, Montgomery is evidently faced with a formidable task on the Mareth Line if the Italians (who are reported to form the bulk of its garrison) fight with the determination they are sometimes capable of displaying. Italian artillery has generally fought well, and the defences were constructed on an artillery framework. We can be sure, too, that Rommel has made liberal use of mines and wire.

I still believe that Rommel will use the Mareth Line essentially as a delaying position, and would be unwilling to risk decisive action with the Gabès defile in his rear on which his line of retreat would converge. If he risks decisive action at all it will be, I think, at the Gabès position, where a powerful armoured reserve might have exceptional opportunities of counter-attacking a force that broke through. Moreover, retreat to

join Von Arnim in the north would be very much easier from Gabès than from the Mareth position; and that, it can hardly be doubted, is Rommel's ultimate intention.

The attacks which have been made on the 1st Army in the north do not seem to have been part of an original far-reaching plan, since they were not launched till Rommel's operation broke down. It is more probable that Von Arnim either intended to relieve pressure on Rommel or to take advantage of the situation to improve his own position.

RUSSIA The capture of Kharkov on February 16, at the beginning of the period under review, especially as it involved the defeat of picked troops just arrived from Germany, made the situation of the Germans both in the Donetz basin and at Orel more than ever precarious. When it was followed by a renewal of the advance from the Lozovaya region towards the Dnieper bend, and a widening of this thrust towards Poltava, an outer ring of encirclement of the Donetz basin threatened to develop. Under these circumstances, and while snow conditions gave the Russians superior mobility, the Germans seem to have decided that retreat to the Dnieper was too dangerous to attempt. Material may have been evacuated by the one railway still open, but there have been no indications of a general retreat. There is a large army in the basin; with the contraction of the front it has probably built up considerable reserves, and with its many industrial towns the area it holds is highly defensible.

RUSSIAN FRONT. Great thrusts by the Red Army continued throughout February 1943, though enemy counter-attacks in the Donetz basin increased in violence towards the end of the month. This map shows the extent of Soviet advances between Feb. 16 and 27. *By courtesy of The Times*

It seems therefore to be the Germans' intention to hold their ground in the Donetz basin, at Novorossisk and the Taman peninsula and at Orel, counter-attacking vigorously in order to check and exhaust the Russian attack, in the hopes that the spring thaw will finally bring it to a standstill. The fact that in the south thaw has this year begun exceptionally early has probably influenced German policy, and has accounted for some slowing down of Russian progress. The Russians are, however, maintaining pressure and are reported to have made preparations to continue to do so even in the height of the thaw

THE German bridgehead covering approaches to the Kerch Strait is growing smaller, and Novorossisk is isolated. At Orel, too, the ring is closing; and the railway to Briansk, the sole avenue of communications still open, is threatened. In the Donetz basin the struggle is at its height. German counter-attacks have been strong and fierce, directed chiefly towards the north-west against the flank of the Russian thrust which had penetrated to Krasnoarmeisk, cutting the main railway to the Dnieper and threatening to isolate the vital centre of Stalino completely. The situation is obscure. The Germans claim to have recaptured Krasnoarmeisk and some important towns on the railway to Poltava—claims probably to some extent true since they have not been specifically denied by the Russians. Meantime the Russian attack from Rostov and the east slowly advances.

The closely built-up industrial area of the Donetz gives both sides such exceptional defensive opportunities that the battle which is raging is unlikely to produce a rapid decision; but it will make great demands on reserves of which Germany is short. If, in order to form an offensive reserve, the Germans intend to hold the shortest possible front, retreat from the Donetz sooner or later would be necessary. With the double purpose of preventing complete encirclement of the Donetz army, and of retaining the line of the Dnieper as a position to which it could withdraw, should more favourable conditions for retreat occur, the Germans are employing reserves brought from the west to counter-attack the Russian thrust towards Dnepropetrovsk. They have slowed down its progress, but have failed to remove the menace.

Will the Germans have sufficient reserves to withstand unrelenting pressure? Constant local counter-attacks are liable to lead to wasteful expenditure of fresh troops with only temporary results. It may be remembered that when they employed similar methods to hold the line of the lower Donetz the Russian advance was for a time checked, but eventually surged forward.

Meanwhile, the Russians have made marked progress north-west of Kharkov in the general direction of Kiev, and threaten to interrupt all direct communication between the German armies of the centre and south.

Russian offensives, about which little information has been given, are also, according to German accounts, developing on the Central and Northern fronts, where winter conditions still favour Russian tactics.

It is not surprising, under such continuous attacks that shortage of fighting reserves, and of man-power to maintain industrial production, is causing alarm, approaching to consternation, at Hitler's H.Q.

The Germans may still pin their hopes on being able to fight more effectively when summer hardens the ground, but I see no reason why the Russians should not in summer display the same new-found tactical and strategical skill that has been so marked this winter and to which their amazing successes must be largely attributed.

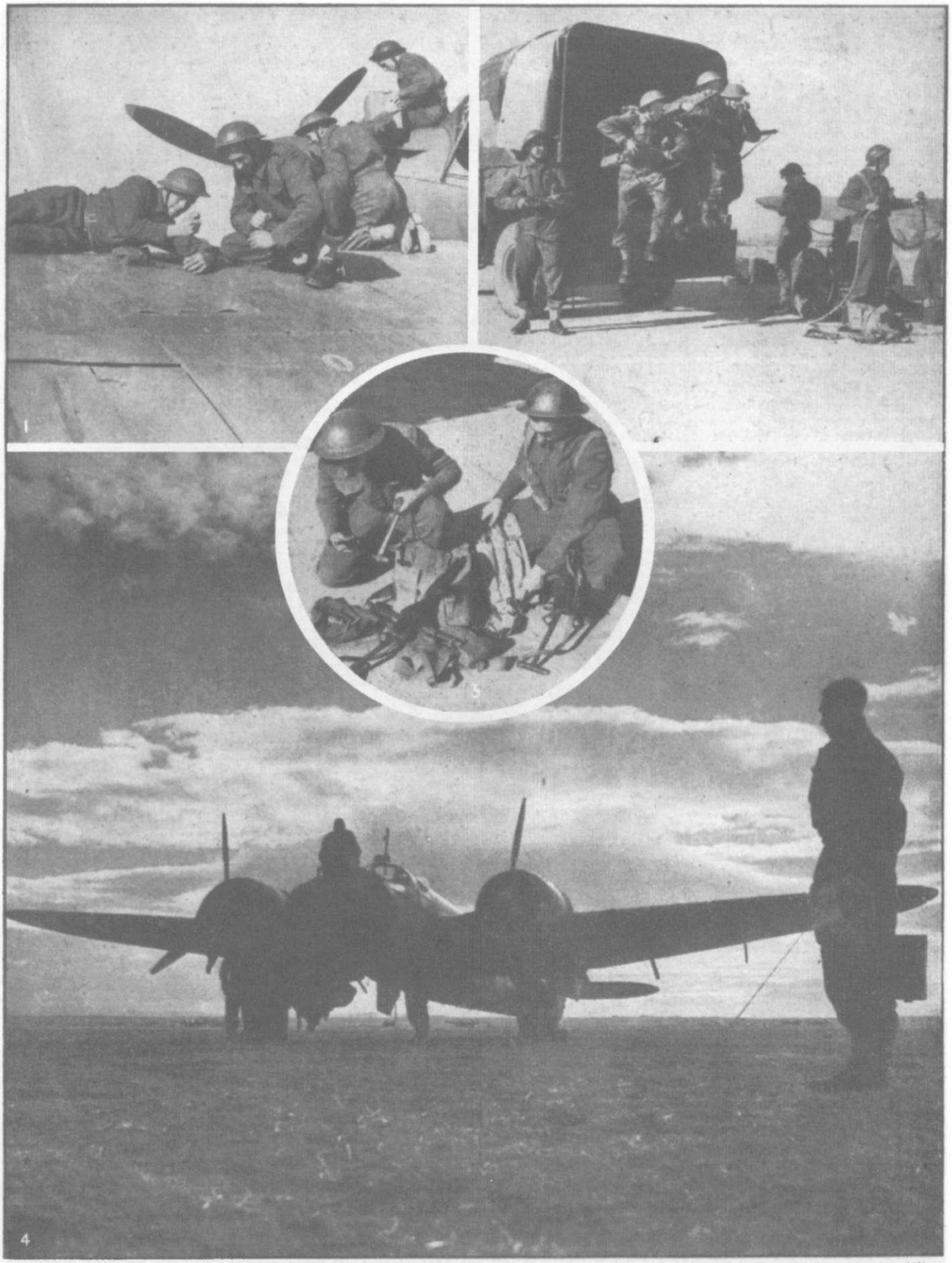
CASUALTY CLEARING STATION in a N. African battle area. There is one C.C.S. to a Division; the unit is completely mobile, carrying tentage for operating theatres and wards. Expert surgeons and medical staffs are employed, and 200 casualties can be treated at a time. *Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright*

Montgomery's Men Nearing the Mareth Line

8th ARMY'S ADVANCE INTO TUNISIA began on Jan. 29, 1943, when forward units crossed the border from Tripolitania. 1, R.A.F. and R.A.A.F. ground crews prepare a trackless stretch of desert for an airfield. 2, An airman walks a gangway plank from a waterlogged lorry at Allied Air H.Q. during the rainy season. 3, Lorries of the 51st (Highland) Division cross the frontier into Tunisia. 4, Gen. Montgomery, commander of the 8th Army, photographed with Gen. Leclerc in Tripoli. To reach the latter city Gen. Leclerc's Fighting French column trekked 2,800 miles from Chad Territory in the Sahara.

Photos, British Official : Crown Copyright

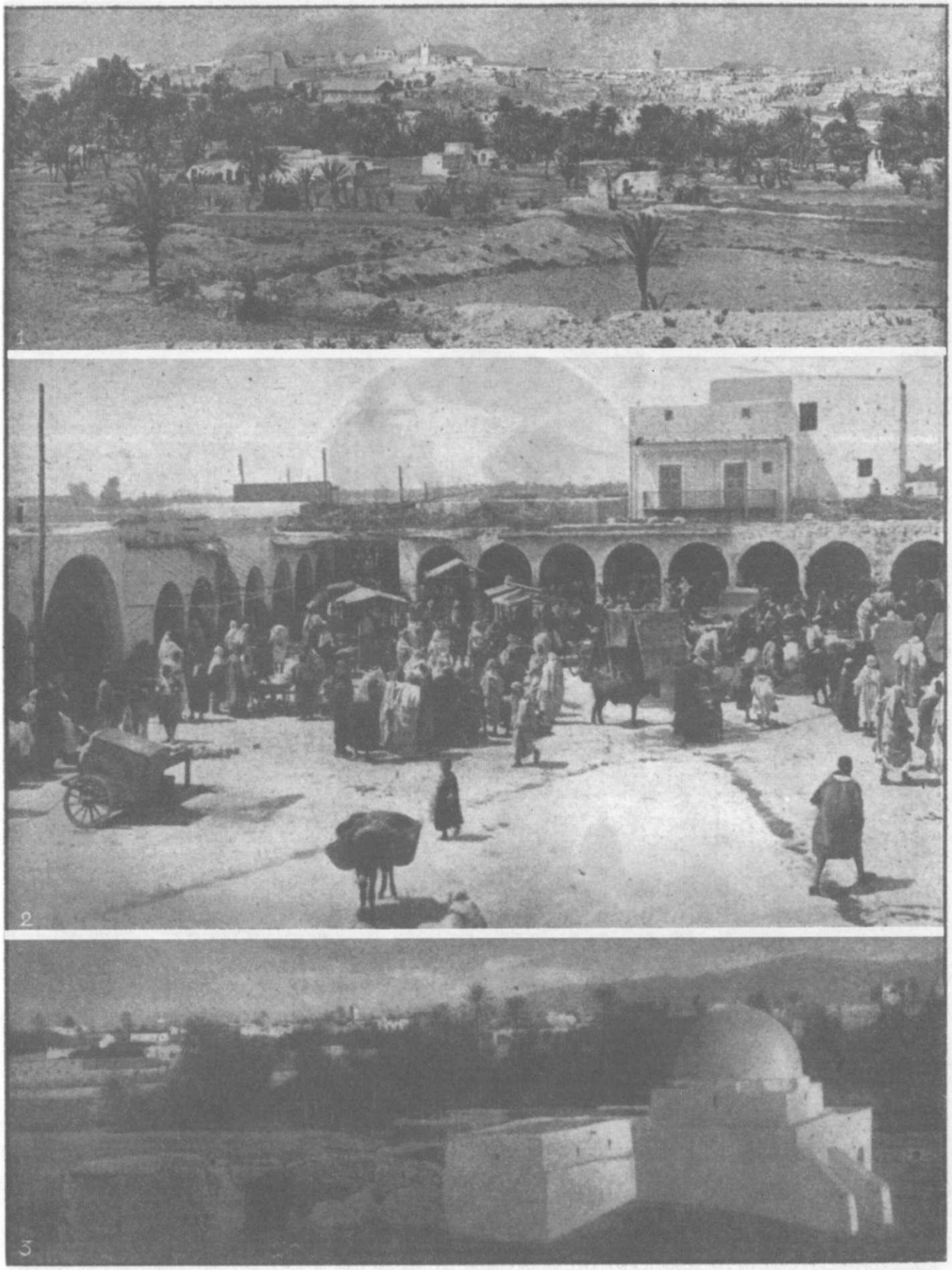
In North Africa the R.A.F. Has Its Commandos



AERODROMES CAPTURED IN THE N. AFRICAN FIGHTING are speedily put into operation by R.A.F. Servicing Commandos—men specially trained by Combined Operations Command to carry out dangerous tasks likely to be met with in the early stages of assault landing operations. 1, Servicing Commando airmen prepare a fighter to take the air. 2, Arrival by lorry of a fresh squad to support that already at work. 3, Unrolling tool-kits, with Sten guns handy. 4, Bisley light bomber, one of a squadron recently operating with the R.A.F. in N. Africa, lands at an advanced air-field.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright.

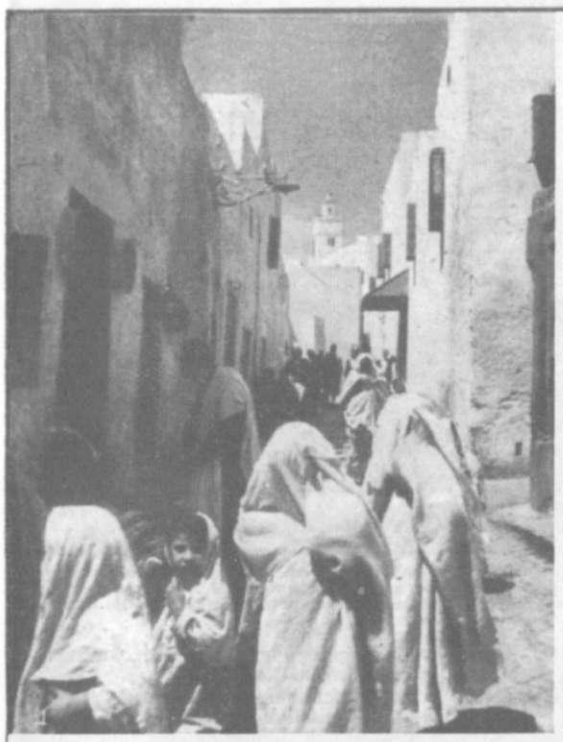
Tunisian Towns the Communiqués Have Mentioned

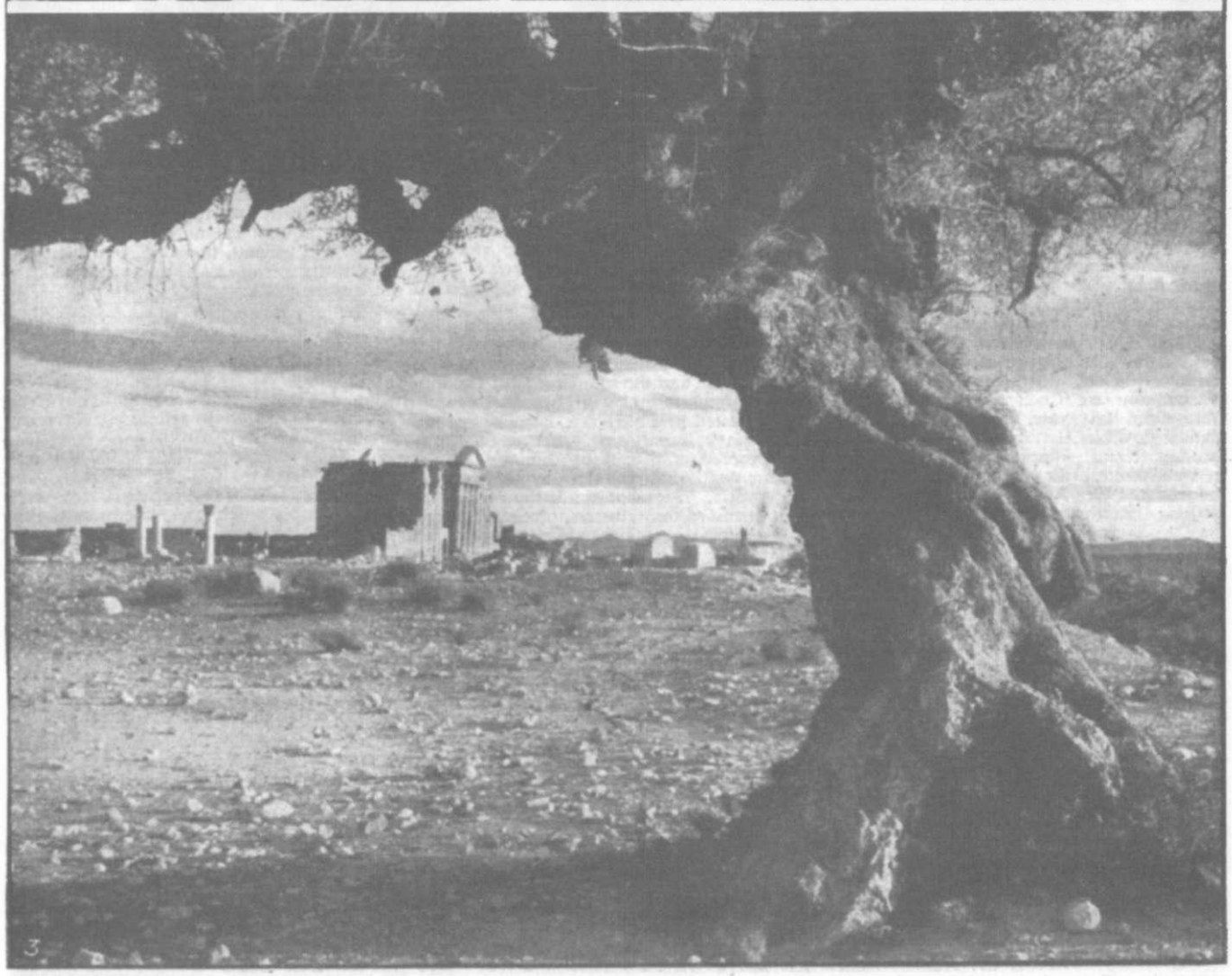


STRATEGIC POINTS OF SOUTHERN TUNISIA: 1, Medenine, occupied by the 8th Army on Feb. 20, 1943, is situated 40 miles N.W. of Ben Gardane, and forms a major outpost of the Mareth Line. 2, Native market at Gabès. This oasis port, situated just over 100 miles from the Tripolitanian border, has received shattering attacks from our bombers. 3, Gafsa, evacuated by American troops by Feb. 16, saw a fierce battle between our Allies and a force of some 130 German tanks. (See map, p. 626.)

Photos, Paul Popper, E.N.A.

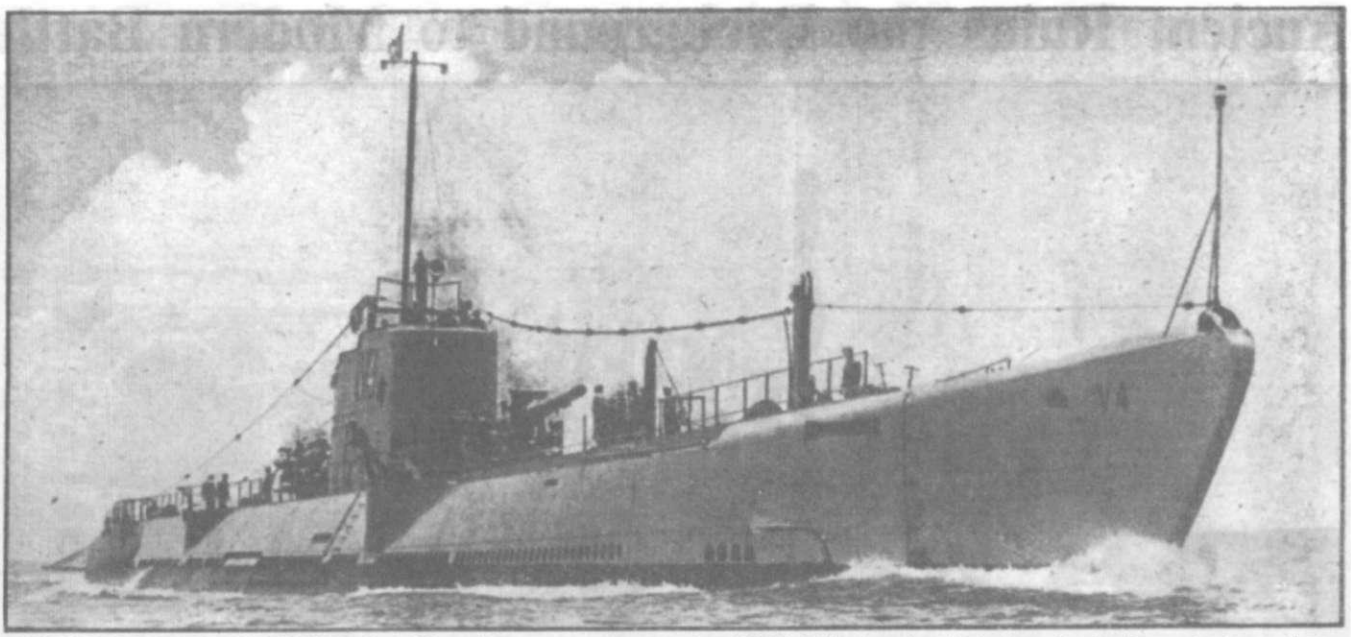
Ancient Ruins the Background to Modern Battle





RECENT FIGHTING IN TUNISIA has raged around towns rich in Roman remains. 1, Street scene in the native quarter of Sfax, the port in the Gulf of Gabès which is the export centre of the world's largest phosphate region. 2, Ruins of the Byzantine Basilica at Tebessa—an important Allied base near the Algerian border, W. of the Kasserine Pass from which the Germans were pushed back in mid-February 1943. 3, Remains of Roman temples at Sbeitla—recaptured by U.S. troops on March 1.

Photos, Paul Popper, E.N.A.



AMERICA'S LARGEST SUBMARINE, the 2,710-ton Argonaut, was announced on Feb. 21, 1943 to have been lost when returning from patrol operations. Laid down in 1925 and completed in 1928, the Argonaut had a complement of 89 officers and men. Her armament comprised two 6-in. guns, four 21-in. tubes, and 60 mines. The submarine's engines were replaced in 1940-41, and at the same time the latest system of torpedo control was installed.
Photo, New York Times Photos

THE WAR AT SEA

by **Francis E. McMurtrie**

THERE has been a complete reorganization of naval commands in the Mediterranean as the result of Allied landings in French North Africa and the complete conquest of Libya by the Eighth Army.

Admiral of the Fleet Sir Andrew Cunningham, hitherto in command of Allied sea forces in the North African expedition, has now been appointed Commander-in-Chief in all that part of the Mediterranean coming within the scope of present operations against the enemy in Tunisia and Italy. This approximately corresponds to the Western basin of the Mediterranean and the Central area to a point beyond Malta.

Admiral Sir Henry Harwood, who relieved Sir Andrew Cunningham as C.-in-C., Mediterranean Fleet, when the latter went to Washington as Chief of the Admiralty Delegation last year, now becomes Commander-in-Chief, Levant and Red Sea, with headquarters at Alexandria.

Vice-Admiral Sir Stuart Bonham-Carter has relieved Vice-Admiral Sir Ralph Leatham as Flag Officer in charge at Malta. The latter has had a very strenuous time of it under Axis air attacks since he took up this post a year ago. For some months past he has been acting as Governor in the absence in this country on sick leave of Viscount Gort.

Bonham-Carter is a name already well known in Malta. A kinsman of the new Flag Officer in charge, General Sir Charles Bonham-Carter, was Governor and C.-in-C. of the island from 1936 to 1940.

FRENCH WARSHIPS to Join the Allies' Battle-line

The French battleship Richelieu, of 35,000 tons, has arrived at the United States Navy Yard, New York, to have repaired the damage received at Dakar in July 1940. She was attacked first by a British motor-boat which blew off one of her propellers by dropping depth charges at the stern, and then by naval aircraft, which torpedoed her. She was thus immobilized until French West Africa threw in its lot with the Allies recently. Patched up sufficiently to cross the Atlantic under escort, she will now be completely refitted in order to take her place in the line against Axis battleships, should those elusive vessels ever elect to come out and fight. She should be a good match for one of the contemporary Italian battleships of the Littorio class, each being armed with eight 15-in. guns.

The cruiser Montcalm also made the passage from Dakar, proceeding to a Virginian yard for repair. Two destroyers have gone to another port. These, of course, are not by any means the only available French warships in African ports. There are besides the Richelieu's disabled sister ship, the Jean Bart, two or three more cruisers (one of them, the Primaguet, may be too badly damaged to be worth repair)—four destroyers and at least a dozen submarines—all of which can be most usefully employed as a reinforcement, the cruisers and destroyers in ocean patrol and escort duties, and the submarines in attacking Axis communications with Tunisia.

It is stated by Col. Knox, Secretary of the U.S. Navy Department, that negotiations are proceeding with Vice-Admiral Godfroi for the addition of the ships demilitarized at Alexandria. These comprise the old battleship Lorraine, four cruisers, three destroyers, and a submarine. Other ships that may be affected are the aircraft carrier Béarn and the cruisers Emile Bertin and Jeanne d'Arc, immobilized at Martinique and Guadeloupe, in the West Indies.

In a recent R.A.F. attack on the German naval base at Wilhelmshaven, the main explosive depot of the dockyard, containing ammunition for guns of various calibres, torpedo warheads, mines and depth charges, received a hit which destroyed 40 out of the 50 sheds in the depot, with an explosion which is described as "terrific." This is probably the most severe blow that has yet been dealt to Wilhelmshaven, one of the two principal naval bases in Germany. It is remarkable that this is the first time in several raids that such an important target has been found.

In the minelaying submarine Argonaut, of 2,710 tons displacement, reported overdue and presumed lost, the United States Navy has lost its largest under-water unit. The Argonaut has also been the biggest submarine in the world since the Surcouf, of 2,880 tons, manned by the Fighting French, was reported missing in April 1942.

Experience shows that very large submarines are seldom much of a success. The biggest British submarine ever built was the X 1 of 2,425 tons, which was scrapped some years ago after a comparatively short life, of which an undue proportion was spent in modifying and refitting the vessel. Our largest submarines today are the Severn and Clyde, of 1,850 tons; the Porpoise and Rorqual, of 1,500 and 1,520 tons respectively; and the numerous Thunderbolt class, of 1,090 tons.

So far as is known, none of the U-boats greatly exceed 1,000 tons, and the majority of those now at sea range from 500 to 750 tons. It is evident, therefore, that there is a limit to the useful size of the submarine as at present designed.

ALLIED VESSELS by the Hundred Cross the Atlantic in Safety

According to some figures recently supplied to the Press by Admiral of the Fleet Sir Andrew Cunningham, from the date of the first landings in North Africa on November 8 until the middle of February no fewer than 780 Allied ships, totalling 6,500,000 tons gross, arrived safely in Algerian and Moroccan ports. These included cargo ships from America which were under escort of the United States Navy, besides British convoys.

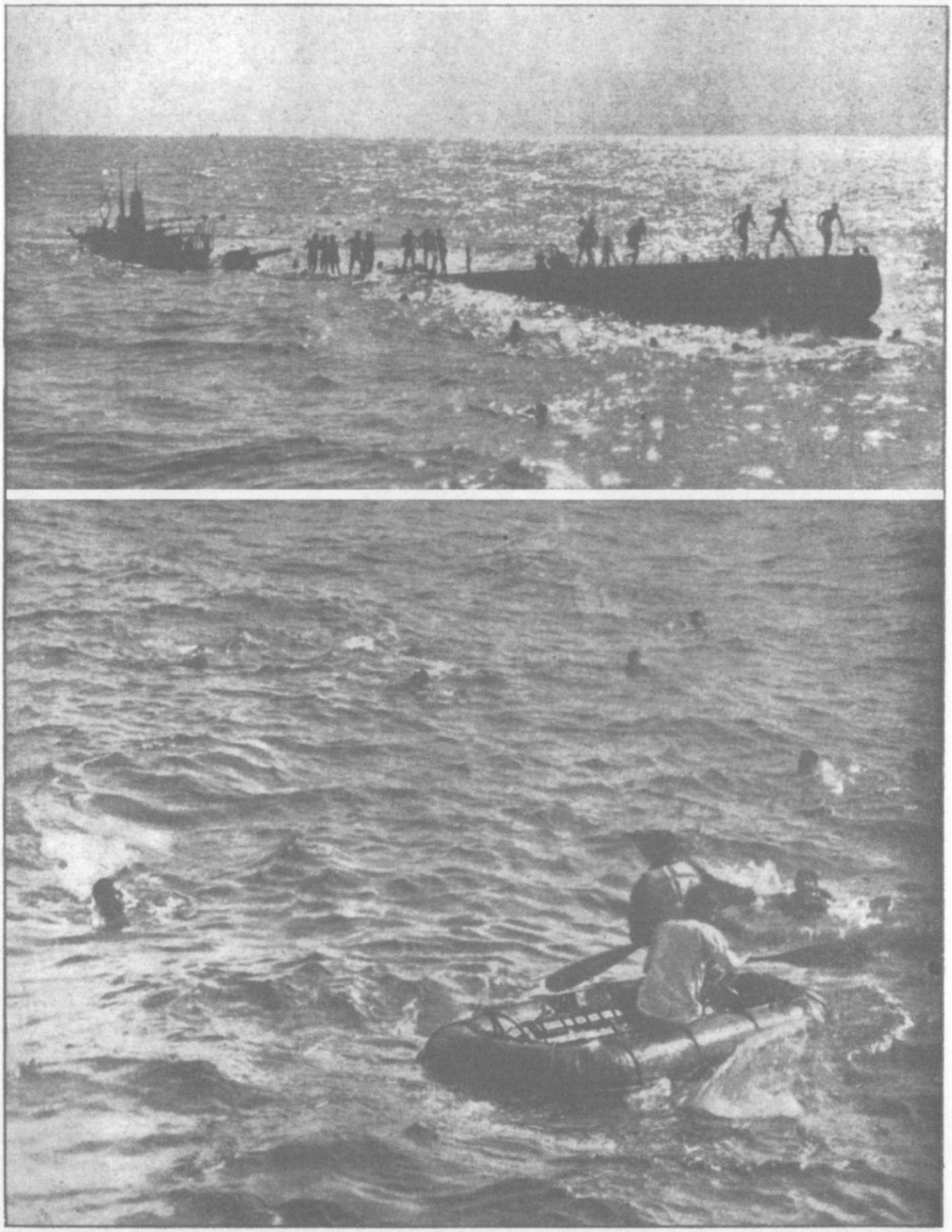
By no means such a cheering picture presents itself to our enemies, who have only succeeded in keeping their troops in Tunisia supplied at heavy cost. Week after week the Admiralty regularly reports lists of Axis supply vessels, ranging from big tankers and transports to schooners, which have been sunk or disabled by our submarines. In addition our light surface forces, including cruisers, destroyers, and motor torpedo-boats, and aircraft of the Royal Navy and the R.A.F., inflict quite a considerable amount of damage. No prudent underwriter would be eager to insure the ships which ply on this hazardous route.

Undoubtedly, the time will come when the Axis armies in Tunisia will find themselves forced to surrender or attempt an evacuation on Dunkirk lines. When that situation develops, it is very improbable that the Luftwaffe will be able to afford anything approaching an adequate "umbrella" to the evacuating ships. Nor is it probable that the Italians will be ready to volunteer to man small craft to fill the gap as our own amateur sailors did in May 1940.

France's Mighty Richelieu Arrives in New York

PAST NEW YORK'S SKYSCRAPERS glides the great French battleship Richelieu. She left Dakar in French W. Africa on Jan. 30, 1943 and arrived in America 12 days later, having been escorted in company with other French warships across the Atlantic by a number of U.S. destroyers. This 35,000-ton giant had been at Dakar since June 1940, when she was transferred there uncompleted from Brest. In this photo she has just passed under Brooklyn Bridge (see Vol. III, pages 33, 342). *Photo, Keystone*

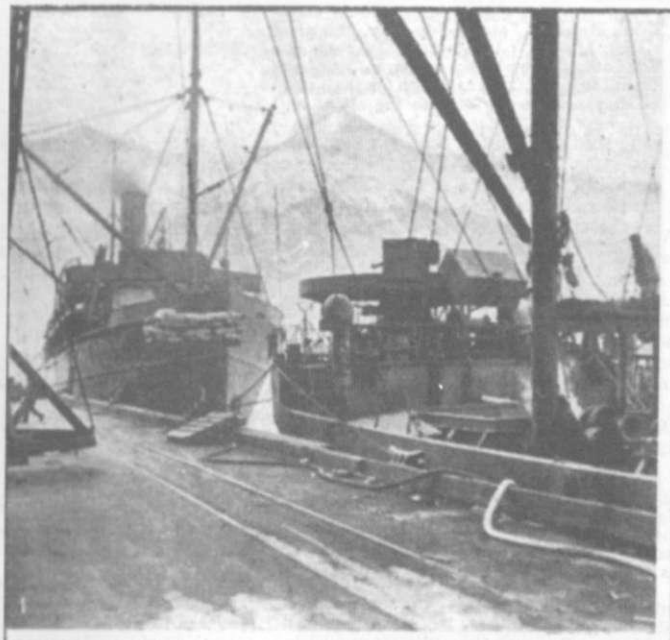
A British Trawler Met an Italian Submarine

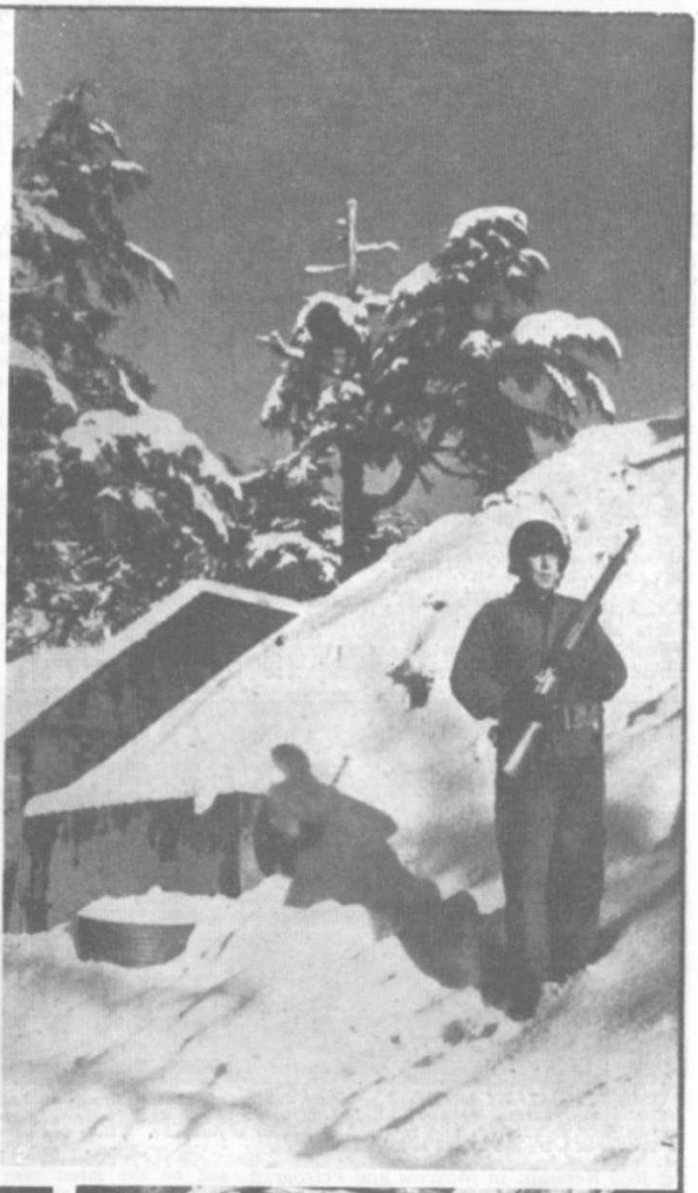


H.M.S. LORD NUFFIELD, one of the Royal Navy's trawler fleet, has fought and destroyed an Italian submarine off the N. African coast (it was announced on Jan. 5, 1943). On sighting the enemy vessel—later identified as the Emo—the trawler fired depth charges, inflicting severe damage and so forcing the submarine to surface. A fierce duel ensued, during which the Emo's conning tower was hit; her crew then abandoned their rapidly sinking ship. They are shown (top) preparing to jump overboard. Below, survivors are swimming towards a rubber dinghy before being rescued by the Lord Nuffield. Only one man was wounded aboard the trawler as a result of this spirited action. The Emo had a surface displacement of 941 tons; her main armament was two 3·9 in. guns.

Photos, L.N.A.

American Troops Amid the Alaskan Snows





WITH THE U.S. FORCES IN THE FAR NORTH. 1, Supplies being unloaded at Skagway for dispatch by rail to the American troops. From this port a railway joins the Alaska-Canadian highway at Whitehorse in the Yukon (see page 332). 2, U.S. Marine stands guard at a naval operating base. 3, Wading through ice-blocked waters, members of a U.S. Navy ground crew guide a PBY patrol flying-boat to its base. 4, After the day's work these men listen-in to the latest war news.

Photos, Pictorial Press, Keystone

This Is the Red Army We Salute Today

"On this anniversary occasion," said Mr. Anthony Eden, Britain's Foreign Secretary, at a great "tribute to the Red Army" meeting at the Albert Hall, London, on Feb. 21, 1943, "we pay tribute to every department of the Red Army, to the High Command under the supreme direction of Mr. Stalin, to the generals in the field, to the junior officers, to the N.C.O.s and men for their stubborn endurance in adversity and the ardour with which they have swung over to the offensive."

WHEN the Red Army was born twenty-five years ago they were putting up the shutters in Russia. The Tsardom had fallen in bloody ruin, and it seemed certain that the Bolsheviks, too, would shortly fall in a ruin even bloodier. Yet as page after page of history has been turned, each has borne the record of some new enterprise by the people who, only a generation ago, were held to be amongst the most backward, the most dull-witted and stolid in their subjection. In Russia we have the spectacle of a hundred and ninety millions of the human race engaged in the greatest experiment of all time—nothing less than the achievement in a few decades of all that Britain and America and the western world as a whole have taken centuries to attain, even now are still attempting. In that great experiment the Red Army has played, and will continue to play, its part as its sure shield and buckler.

Originally the Red Army was formed out of detachments of workers and peasants (the original Red Guards), with some broken remnants of the Tsarist forces, who fought for the Red Republic in Moscow and Petrograd in the autumn of 1917. By February 1918, when the Red Army, organized, directed and inspired by Leo Trotsky's demoniac energy, was formally constituted and halted the Kaiser's troops advancing on Leningrad, they numbered about 50,000; today they number—how many millions? Always they have been a highly disciplined force. So, too, was the Tsar's army; but there is one all-significant difference, that in the Russian armies of 1914-18 nine out of ten men were illiterate, while in those of 1943 nine out of ten have had at least a fair schooling.

RUSSIAN MILITARY LEADERS recently decorated at the Kremlin. Left to right: Lt.-Gen. Rokossovsky, Marshal Voronov, Lt.-Gen. Tolbukin (all of whom received the Order of Suvorov), and Lt.-Gen. Gromadin, who received the Order of Kutuzov. These are new decorations, named in honour of warriors famed in Russian history. *Photo, U.S.S.R. Official*

As a portrait of the Red Army man of today we cannot surpass that drawn by The Times special correspondent in Moscow in a recent brilliant dispatch. The fighting-men of Britain and America, he writes, would not feel strangers beside him.

> In company they would find the Russian soldier quieter, more reserved, more formal in his attitude towards his fellows than they are used to; and in intimacy more impulsive, articulate, and emotional. In moments of grief, anger, and triumph he is more exalted, but in the humdrum everyday experiences of life perhaps a little more patient. He smiles less, rarely laughs, but sighs more; cynicism is far from his nature; and his favourite songs, like the popular "Dug-out" and "Let's have a smoke," are wistful and tender, his thirst for education is unquenched by his experiences, and many go into battle with text-books in their pockets; his taste is extraordinarily high . . . Their feeling for home is intense.

Another of the Russian soldier's outstanding characteristics is his intense patriotism. Patriotic motives (we learn from The Times correspondent) are probably more outspokenly expressed in the songs and literature of the Red Army than anywhere else in the world. Some of their rousing marching songs have the stirring quality of Hearts of Oak and John Brown's Body, and of all the British poets Rudyard Kipling has most readers in the Red Army. Very remarkable has been the growth of patriotic fervour during late years, a growth deliberately fostered by Mr. Stalin and his colleagues, but it is not patriotism of the "flag-wagging" variety. To quote another passage from the dispatch:

> Rather has it been a discovery of all that is valuable and significant for the present time in Russia's heroic past; and the men who are fighting for the federation of Socialist republics have been made conscious that behind them, as they take their places in the trenches and gun emplacements, lie not only the great factories on the slopes of the Urals and wide cultivated plains in Siberia, Moscow with its still incomplete planning, a host of new cities beside the rivers and on the forest edge of buoyant, aspiring, dogged workers and farmers of contemporary Russia, but also the cathedrals and the Kremlin and ancient tulip-domed churches; poets, musicians, and novelists, and those who fought for a land ordered by justice and reason, knowing no slavery—a Russia ever renewing herself by the fruitful talent of her much-enduring people.

That every soldier carries a field-marshal's baton in his knapsack was true of Napoleon's army in that at least some of his marshals rose from the lowest rank. But it is much more true of the Red Army. Trotsky had to find his leaders where he could find them, and in those early days of perpetual conflict many a man who had been a private in the Imperial Army was jumped to commissioned rank and rose high in the service. Marshal Zhukov, who, under Stalin, has been perhaps chiefly responsible for the recent victories over Germany's most experienced generals, served three years in the ranks under Tsar Nicholas and four as a subaltern under Trotsky. Marshal Timoshenko was another private in the Tsar's army; Marshal Budenny was a sergeant, and General Yeremenko, of Stalingrad fame, a corporal. Marshal Shaposhnikov was a colonel in the pre-Revolution army, but in 1917 retained his command by the vote of his men, and in 1918 was one of the first high-ranking Tsarist officers to join the Red Army staff. But most of the two thousand Russian generals—450 new generals were commissioned by Stalin a few weeks ago—are young men in their thirties or early forties. Shaposhnikov is 60, Timoshenko 47, and Zhukov 46; but Chuykov, whose 62nd Army held Stalingrad, is 42, and Krylov, his chief-of-staff, two years younger. General Rodimtsev, whose guards played so fine a part in the Stalingrad battle, is 38—from a peasant's hut he joined as a private in 1927; while General Rokossovsky, in command of the army of the Don, is about the same age. General Golikov, whose troops stormed Voronezh and Kharkov, is 42; Gen. Malinovsky, who has twice recaptured Rostov, is 44; and Gen. Govorov, whose most recent achievement has been the raising of the siege of Leningrad, is 46.

That the Russian commanding personnel was younger than in a number of other armies, in particular the British, was favourably commented upon by Field-Marshal Wavell as long ago as 1936.

SINCE the outbreak of war several highly significant changes have been made in the Red Army. In November 1941 infantry divisions which had particularly distinguished themselves in battle were renamed Guards, with special uniforms and double pay for rank-and-file and 50 per cent more for higher officers. Tank Guards were established in the following month, followed by Cavalry Guards and Air Force Guards. Epaulettes, once denounced as Tsarist foppery, are now permitted to the officers; and officers' rank is indicated by metal stars and braided stripes on the shoulder-straps instead of by discreet collar-tab identifications. Such terms as *offitzier* and *soldati* have returned into military parlance, replacing to some extent commander and Red Army man. Then the Revolutionary decorations, the Order of the Red Banner and the the Order of the Red Star, have been supplemented by new military orders for Red Army commanders who have distinguished themselves in the organization and direction of military operations and for success on the field of battle—orders named after heroes of the old eternal Russia, after Suvorov, Kutuzov (familiar to every reader of Tolstoy's War and Peace) and Alexander Nevsky, who captained the army of Novgorod against the Prussian Teutonic Knights in the great Russian victory of Lake Peipus in 1242. Among the first to receive the new Order of Suvorov were Marshal of Artillery Voronov and Marshal Zhukov. Here it may be mentioned that one-third of those decorated for valour during this present war have been neither Russians nor Ukrainians—but Mongols and Uzbeks, Georgians, Tartars, Armenians, Yakuts . . .

One more change must be noted: the conversion of the political commissars, reintroduced into military units a few weeks after the outbreak of war primarily as stiffeners of morale, into regularly commissioned Army officers. This does not mean that the political direction of the struggle is less important than before: on the contrary, the Red Army will be even more political, but there is no longer any necessity for a special corps of political watchdogs charged with the supervision of every officer to see that he keeps to the Party "line."

When Oliver Cromwell was raising his New Model army, the army which scattered the Cavaliers before them like chaff before the wind, he expressed a preference for "a plain, russet-coated captain that knows what he fights for and loves what he knows." The Red Army is filled with such, not only captains, but privates and generals too.

E. ROYSTON PIKE

Russian Cities Liberated by the Soviet Advance

THE RED FLAG FLIES AGAIN in many a Russian city from which the Nazi invaders have been hurled. 1, Joyful inhabitants of Krasnodar crowd round Maj.-Gen. Rosslov, commander of the Soviet force which freed them. 2, In Kharkov soldiers and citizens gather before the City Soviet building from which the Red Flag flies. 3, Russian A.A. gunners install themselves in Kharkov's Central Square, surrounded by the great semi-skyscraper blocks of buildings linked by covered bridges. 4, German troops, rounded up at Rostov, march off to internment. 5, Removing one of the many hated enemy signs in Byelgorod.

Photos, U.S.S.R. Official; Planet News

VIEWS & REVIEWS

Of Vital War Books

by Hamilton Fyfe

General Sikorski on Modern Warfare

IT has long been a gibe against War Offices that they always prepare for the last war —some would say the last war but one —instead of getting ready for the next.

Certainly, if you look at the "defences" of our coast-line, you will be forced to conclude that those who put up miles of barbed wire and countless small blockhouses (as they were called in South Africa forty-two years ago) were thinking in terms of the Boer War of 1899 to 1902, and vainly imagining that what stopped irregular soldiers on the open veld would stop highly-trained German troops possessed of blasting machinery of immense power.

Again, the little concrete obstacles that were turned out by the million in 1940, when we began to realize that invasion was possible, were obviously ordered by generals who thought tanks were still in their last-war stage, and did not understand that invading forces would treat them as contemptuously as a charging rhinoceros might scorn a shower of public-house darts.

GENERAL SIKORSKI, who is now both commander of the Polish army outside Poland and Prime Minister in the shadow Government which sits in London, is a soldier of unusual type. Perhaps I should say unusual among us. In European countries soldiering was taken seriously as a profession. The military art was studied by officers who wanted to rise high in the service, with the same assiduity that lawyers study law or those who aim at being famous doctors devote themselves to medicine or surgery. General Sikorski wrote a book some years before war came in 1939 to give warning that, when it did come, it would be "different from all past wars, not excluding the world conflict of 1914–18." This book, Modern Warfare (Hutchinson, 8s. 6d.), has been reprinted as it stood; and it says much for the General's foresight and quick-witted observation—what Mr. Churchill once called "intelligent anticipation of events even before they occur"—that the interest of what he wrote has not in the least diminished. Indeed, it is even more interesting, now that we can compare his forecast with what has actually happened, than it was in 1935, when to the majority of people most of his anticipations must have seemed rather far fetched.

IN one direction General Sikorski went wrong: he did not expect the seven months' "phoney war," as it was called, during which the opposing forces sat and looked at one another in France. He supposed the German lightning war (*Blitzkrieg*) would start at once. In Germany, he said, there were many experts in military affairs who maintained that the war would be a short one. He himself rather inclined to this view. To quote a passage:

> It is certain that the technical means put at the disposal of the offensive by the progress of science have considerably increased since 1918. The speed of the transport of troops by motor-cars, the motorization of the units, the speed and power of the new tanks, the cooperation of the air force, the improvement of the radio—all these factors now favour the assailant to such an extent that a rapid attack would be much more redoubtable than it was in 1914.

YET the rapid attack, which was made under much less favourable conditions in 1914, did not come in 1939. In war it is the unexpected that happens far more frequently than in most other human affairs. An outstanding example of this was the belief that the Maginot Line defending the frontier of France would be impregnable. All General Sikorski says about this is that "the most solid fortifications do not constitute an absolute guarantee of security." That was proved also at Singapore. But Singapore might have held out if it had occurred to any of the various military and naval chiefs concerned in building that enormously important base that it might be attacked from the land. They anticipated sea attack only. A Maginot Line on the land side of the great naval base, one which would have been short and comparatively cheap to build, might have kept the Japanese at bay.

The use of air-borne troops, which I dealt with in my last article (*see* page 588), was foreshadowed by General Sikorski. He saw it would become possible "to transport to great distances small combative units destined for skirmishes or diversions in the rear of the enemy." This was done with all too terrible success at Rotterdam. He also suggested that "in order to transport a battalion of infantry (500-600 men) entirely equipped for battle, with provisions sufficient for a few days, some twenty aircraft of strong tonnage will be enough." The truth of that was proved in Crete two years ago to our discomfiture.

WELLINGTON said once that the task of an army commander would be simple "if he knew what the enemy was doing on the other side of the hill." So it might have been in his day—if the enemy had not possessed the same advantage. Today both sides have it, through the use of reconnaissance aircraft; but the difficulties of the army commander are as great as ever they were. General Sikorski rather overestimates the extent to which secret movements would be made impossible by this means. General Montgomery was able to surprise the Germans at El Alamein last October; the Russians have over and over again taken them unawares. The other day they caught a Nazi colonel in the act of shaving, and eight officers were unearthed from a dug-out drunk!

This Polish general does not write about war in the German manner—with relish and gleeful contemplation. He deplores the folly of it, the misery caused by it. But he is obliged to recognize that "from the time when men appear on earth and their history is recorded, war seems to have been one of the norms of their existence." He points out the only feasible method of stopping it—"the forming of a union of peaceful nations whose military preparation would be organized according to a common plan. Such a union would limit the military means of each member-country, and would be really capable of imposing peace by exercising an incontestable superiority only as a whole." This, he considered, in 1935, when he wrote, was not "politically mature."

It is worth recalling that Walter Page, United States Ambassador in London from 1913 to 1918, believed such a union could have been formed in 1913, when he declared his opinion that the only way to preserve peace was for all the peaceable nations to say to the Kaiser and his firebrands, "Stop it or we'll all make you!" It could have been done. It was not done because, after the death, in 1924, of Woodrow Wilson, who shared Page's view, there was no statesman big enough to force the necessity for it on the attention of the world.

WHETHER it will be done when peace next comes, no one can say. If it is not, then the plan General Sikorski sketches for anti-aircraft cities will probably have to be put in operation.

> The buildings would be constructed entirely of reinforced concrete and erected in large blocks of flats, in order to diminish their surface and the efficiency of aero-chemical attack. Concrete terraces sufficiently resistant to the action of medium-calibre bombs would replace the present roofs; underground gas-proof, watertight shelters would be under every building; water, gas and electricity would be in armoured pipes.

Underground streets would serve as shelters during raids without interrupting traffic. The area covered by a city would be far larger than at present, with large open spaces, so that no closely-packed target would be offered to the bombers. The public buildings and services would not be centralized as they are now, but scattered. The important administrative centres, factories, and power-stations would be outside the city. Collective shelters would be planned, equipped with watertight doors, compressed-air apparatus and gas-masks, and in addition there would be private shelters in every house. But, in the General's opinion, "the only truly efficient defence against aero-chemical warfare would be the preventive action of the air force through operations which it might undertake against the enemy air force and its bases."

THE reference to chemical attack will have been noticed. General Sikorski was pretty confident that gas would be one of the principal weapons of this war. German professors have dwelt lovingly on the horrors of this method of attack, and predicted that it would shorten wars by terrifying the civilian populations. Well, as both sides would use it, the winners would be those who stood up to it most stoutly. For it is certain that, as the General says, victory "depends largely on the nerves of the nation, on its courage." We may have to brace ourselves for this ordeal yet.

TEAR-GAS TEST in London: a newspaper-vendor carries on. General Sikorski, whose book is reviewed here, regards the use of gas by the enemy as still a possibility, even a probability. *Photo, Sport & General*

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

Old Roads and New in Tunisia

Many an army has marched through the Tunisian valleys, but the roads and tracks that the Romans built, that the Arabs and the Turks and even the modern French have used—such a one, for instance, as is being negotiated by the dispatch-rider in our lower photograph—are altogether out of date in this age of mechanized transport. So the Royal Engineers have gone into action. New roads and bridges have been built, old roads made new (top right), even streams diverted (top left).

War in the Shadow of the Atlas

For the first time in history a British Army is fighting amid the Atlas Mountains of Tunisia, amid the hills covered with plantations of olive trees, the wheatfields and orchards, the vineyards, over the ploughed fields of rich red earth. Something of the landscape is suggested by these photographs recently taken in the 1st Army zone. 1, British paratroops just "come to earth"; 2, a patrol above a colonist's farm; 3, a distant glimpse of the German-occupied village of Mateur.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

Where the 1st Army Are Engaged

Mud has been not the least of the hindrances to Gen. Anderson's progress in Tunisia, and the country shown in this photograph (4) of British infantry moving up under shell-fire to attack Bou Arada, would seem to make heavy going even in the sunshine. Over such a terrain mules have an advantage over trucks, and many are now included in the Allies' transport (5). But the road along which men of the R.A.F. Regiment are marching (6) looks first class—no doubt thanks to the R.E.s.

Tunisian Panorama

Specially drawn for THE WAR ILLUSTRATED *by Félix Gardon*

Mountains cleft by narrow gorges, rolling hills and broad sweeping plains, salt lakes and palm-shaded oases, wadis that are now dry and now swept by tumultuous torrents, the whole enclosed between the Mediterranean and that other sea that is of the illimitable sands—this is Tunisia, now after many a long year the battlefield of warring powers.

What Sort of a Land Is This Tunisia?

When the Anglo-Americans first passed from Algeria into Tunisia we published an article on the latter (see page 396) telling something of its history and its development under French rule. The Tunisian campaign has been longer than was at first anticipated, and below we give some further information concerning a country which is still a hotly contested battlefield.

WHERE the massive bulk of North Africa bulges out into the Mediterranean between Sardinia and Sicily is Tunisia. It is a land of rather less than 50,000 square miles, about the same size as Greece, about a quarter the size of France—a land of physical variety and abounding contrasts. For the most part it is rugged, but in the north it is definitely mountainous, since two spurs of the great Atlas range come down to the sea at Cape Blanc and Cape Bon. Towards the east and south the mountains gradually subside, merging first into a plateau, then into a low, sandy desert separated from the sea by a fringe of palm. The whole of the east coast, from Susa to Gabès, constitutes one big plain, Sahel it is called, low-lying and fertile.

In all this area, indeed in the whole of Tunisia, there is but one river, the Mejerda; for the rest, Tunisia is watered by mountain streams, torrents in the rainy season, but in the summer their beds are dried-up wadis. The Mejerda rises in Algeria and empties into the Gulf of Tunis. On either side of its broad, flat plain, covered with wheat-fields, groves of oranges and olives—the plain that has already seen so much hard fighting between Anderson's men and Von Arnim's, and will no doubt see very much more—are ranges of noble hills whose slopes are covered with vineyards, with forests of oak and cork. South of the Mejerda plain (writes Mr. E. A. Montague, The Manchester Guardian correspondent in Tunisia) it is Arab country. "Riding from farm to farm one may meet not only the ordinary Arab peasant, muffled in his robe striped with brown and dirty white, shuffling his bare feet in the mud, but grave, courteous men splendidly dressed, riding fine horses with embroidered saddle-cloths." Memorable things, Mr. Montague goes on, may happen to you in these hills.

"You may wake to see the tawny vineyards glowing brown and gold under the sunrise and the far northern hills clothed in all the colours of the opal, with a drift of mist drawn like a veil across their throats as the night's rain smokes upward from the plains. You may watch those same hills at sunset pass from red to royal purple and so into a deep glowing blue as the night closes around them. You may eat your lunch in a sunny upland glen beside a stream that was made for trout, and listen for a pastoral hour to a little Arab boy playing on his pipe as he watches his herd of sheep and goats."

A LOVELY and innocent land indeed, but to the south and east the scene changes. Here, to quote afresh from Mr. Montague's brilliant description: "You enter a country of savage hills and lonely plains; or roads scarcely less primitive than the scattered Arabs whose squalid huts dot the waste; an uncultivated land with no cover for the fighting-man except the solitary wild olive or deeply cut watercourse, or the occasional clump of cactus. This is no-man's-land and looks it; and this is the country of the armoured car and motorized infantryman. They have their scattered headquarters in lonely villages, and at night they send out their patrols to range far and wide perhaps for days. Sometimes the dive-bombers sweep down on them, and then perhaps there is another burnt-out car to make a landmark beside the road, for cover is hard to find at need."

Separating Central Tunisia from the very different south is an almost uninterrupted chain of salt lakes or *shotts*, swampy depressions from sixty to ninety feet below the level of the sea. This is a grim and gloomy region enough, and it would be even more depressing if it were not for the oases, palm-encircled pools of fresh water which are to be found here and there in the wilderness of mud and salt. To the west and to the south, to the east, too, the rippled dunes of the vast Sahara roll endlessly to the horizon. Here there are no villages, no settlements; the only inhabitants are nomad Touaregs, wandering with their herds of camels and goats in search of pasture.

It is in this dreary, desolate region that the *Ligne Mareth* has its being. To call it a line is perhaps a misnomer. It would seem to be far less of a line than the famous Maginot, on whose pattern it is supposed to have been modelled. A line suggests a continuous zone of fortifications, a series of forts with never a gap between. But the Mareth Line is (it would seem) a complex of more or less isolated outposts, whose fields of fire, however, are designed to overlap. Not being a well-defined line its actual location is difficult to define; and in any case the French have not told everybody its secrets. It is generally stated to have its commencement at Zarzis, on the coast some 70 miles south-east of Gabès, and it runs in a south-westerly direction for some 60 miles to the Matmata Hills (up to 2,000 feet in places with many precipice-sided gorges) in the vicinity of the little township of Foum Tathouine.

With its left flank leaning on the sea and its right far out in a mountainous, waterless, and almost trackless desert, the Line possesses enormous natural strength; and the French military engineers have done their best to supplement Nature by building their forts in reinforced concrete or cut out of the desert rock. Everywhere there are cleverly sited gun-emplacements, anti-tank pits, machine-gun posts, hundreds of miles of barbed wire, quantities of mines. The soldiers' quarters are underground for the most part, and they are reported to have tapped subterranean reservoirs of fresh water.

It was in 1938 that the French, made nervous by the shouts of "Nice, Corsica, Tunis!" of the deputies in the Italian parliament, set about the construction of the Mareth Line; at least Tunisia should be safe from an Italian invasion from Tripolitania. In the early months of this war, before the disasters of 1940, the Mareth Line was reported to be in a state of fighting efficiency, but after the armistice it was demilitarized. At least, the Nazis ordered that it should be demilitarized; how far the Armistice Commission were able to enforce their terms is not known. Of late months there is reason to believe that the Line has been considerably strengthened by native labour working under *German* supervision.

BEHIND and in front of the Zarzis-Foum Tathouine line are other military posts and other systems of defence. Even a second line is spoken of, from Gabès to the shotts or salt lakes lying some fifteen to fifty (according to the season) miles to the west.

MARETH LINE. With the occupation by the 8th Army of Medenine on Feb. 20, 1943 our troops were within a few miles of the Matmata Hills (seen in the background of this photograph), which constitute the western flank of the Mareth Line. Very different is this country from the flat sandy wastes of the Western Desert; one slip on the rocky ground may cause a landslide, and tracks winding along dried-up river-beds and hugging the sides of mountain slopes put a severe test on drivers. *Photo, Fox*

Mareth, after which the line is named, is an oasis, about twenty miles south of Gabès; it is not even a village, but just a clump of palms beside a pool, with an estaminet, a store, and some shacks. Gabès is described as the base of the *Ligne Mareth*; it, too, is an oasis, but one far larger—large enough to contain a fair-sized town, on whose outskirts are the military cantonments. It is the terminus, too, of the railway from Tunis via Susa and Sfax, and from it an extension is being built to Medenine—a bleak and dusty place composed of an Arab town and a French quarter, situated at an important desert cross-road (*see* illus. p. 614).

In the Matmata Hills lying to the west numbers of Berber tribesfolk live in pits or caves hollowed out of the easily worked rock. They are amongst the most miserable, the most poverty-stricken, the most squalid and diseased of Tunisia's peoples.

What are the reactions, one wonders, of these benighted barbarians to the soldiers garrisoned in the forts near by—to the sights and sounds of modern battle now being fought in the dusty plain beneath?

UNDER THE SWASTIKA

The Balkan Powder-Barrel Awaits the Spark

For generations the Balkan countries have constituted one of Europe's chief storm-centres, and they are living up to their reputation. As Dr. EDGAR STERN-RUBARTH demonstrates below, they are either already in revolt or just waiting their moment.

IN the first documents betraying the Nazi plan of world conquest—Alfred Rosenberg's secret map of 1934 and his book The Myth of the 20th Century—Austria, Czechoslovakia and Hungary (with Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Switzerland, Alsace-Lorraine, Scandinavia, Finland, the Baltic States and the Ukraine) are shown as parts of one great German Reich; while the Balkans are also included as a "Protectorate." Albania and Greece, presumably preserved for Italy, are excluded.

Hitler's initial triumphs were due to his Fifth Column, propaganda, and bribery. Nowhere were the conditions more favourable for these preliminary activities than in the Balkans, an area slightly larger than France, yet split up into half-a-dozen national units, marked by ancient and furious antagonisms in race, language, religion, and economic interests; by unsettled frontiers mostly of recent date; and by a comparatively low state of education and technique.

THE FUEHRER had to fear but one element of resistance: the bond of Panslavism, uniting most of these units and linking them up with his Enemy No. 1, Russia. The realization of that potential danger, mitigated by Hungary's and, in part, Rumania's particular ethnical composition, may have affected his time-table in that he decided to subjugate the Balkans before he turned to attack Russia. But now that Hitler has suffered crushing reverses in Russia, that same danger crops up in the shape of unquenchable revolt in every one of the puppet-ruled or enslaved Balkan countries, of revenge for the brutal Nazi methods, mass-murder, pillaging, deportation and enslavement. By these methods the Nazis have succeeded in wiping out an old German, or at least Germanic, predominance and influence in all the countries concerned. Where a clever exploitation of the prevailing German language, Germany's buying power for agricultural products, and of the natural trend of all Balkan high-roads towards Europe's points-of-junction in Germany, might have led most Balkan peoples into the fold of a friendly and neighbourly Germany, whatever her regime (the Balkans themselves had mostly half-dictatorial ones still), the ruthless treatment meted out to the Balkan peoples by the Nazis has opened their eyes once and for all.

It hardly needed the refuge offered to their exiled governments, the help granted to them by Britain and her Allies, to make even the most backward peasant in the Balkans realize the everlasting threat to the very existence of smaller nations, and to make him turn towards new ideals—and also to fight for them, with all the undaunted spirit of old fighting races, rebels in turn against Turkish or Hapsburg rule, with more than a memory of the old law of the blood feud, and with every facility for guerilla warfare. That fight, ever since Hitler swept through the Balkans in 1940, has immobilized between 25 and 35 Axis divisions badly needed elsewhere; and now, when invasion of the Continent is menacing a weakened Nazi horde, it corrodes its armour from within. Post-haste, fortifications are being improvised all along the Greek coast of the Aegean, centring around Salonika, and on the isles surrounding the Peninsula, from Corfu in the west to Crete, the Dodecanese, Lemnos, Mytilene and Imbros in the east. Paratroops are kept in a state of readiness; protecting air forces, badly needed in the Western Mediterranean and on the English Channel, are held on the Greek islands, and the puppets—Bulgaria in particular, since she has stood out against being involved in the war with Russia—are pressed by all possible means into helping with the defence of the Balkan shores. Yet all the while a new menace develops: with the counter-offensive of the Russian armies, supported by their Black Sea Fleet, Rumania's and Bulgaria's coastline is being exposed; and Hitler's one source of petroleum, Rumania's oil wells near Ploesti, is threatened. With armaments and, if need be, Allied forces guaranteed to Turkey (wooed in vain for years by Hitler and his sly envoy Von Papen), with the loss of Italy's North African bastions, the ring is closing.

THE GREATER GERMAN REICH as envisaged in 1934 by Alfred Rosenberg, chief framer of Nazi political mythology. This is the map referred to in the accompanying text; it indicates the scope of the ambitions of the Nazis in Europe soon after Hitler's rise to power.

IRRESPECTIVE of their separate ambitions and old rivalries, all the Balkan nations are now trying to escape the Axis net. They even make use of such rivalries to evade Hitler's demand for more troops, more workers: Rumanians and Hungarians respectively refer to their conflict over Transylvania, largely handed over to Hungary by his Vienna Award of 1940, in order to keep strong forces within their own borders. Hungary, openly defying Berlin, ordered all her workers who previously "volunteered" for Germany to report back at the beginning of this year, while dispatching her most ardent pro-Hitlerites, such as the Arrow Cross leader Imredy, to the fighting line in Russia. Rumania did the same; imprisoning Iron Guards, her variety of Nazis, the fickle Conducator Antonescu ordered all Rumanians abroad—and most of them could only have been in Germany—to register for service at home by January 1, 1943. Bulgaria, where a sly and greedy king and a dictatorial government agreed readily enough to compromise with Hitler and take what temporary benefits could be reaped, mostly at the expense of her neighbours Yugoslavia and Greece, has proved even less inclined to shed her blood for Hitler's dream-empire, whether in Russia or in Turkey.

Methods of intimidation have failed just as completely as had previously bribery and cajolery. Old Admiral Horthy, under mysterious circumstances, lost his son and his son-in-law with Hitler's Air Forces; Antonescu, temporarily eclipsed by his so-called nephew, Mihail, lives under a permanent threat of being deposed, imprisoned, even killed by yet more docile elements; King Boris wriggles in the pincers of his Nazi-bribed Home Secretary Gabrovsky and his eighty-two-year-old father, Nazi-pensioned ex-Tsar Ferdinand.

None of them, however, can run much farther against their peoples' wills. With all their old rivalries, they are all equally striving to get away from Hitler and Mussolini, the smaller puppets—Croatia, Slovakia, Albania—not excluded. They find hardly a difference between their own treatment and that of their overwhelmed neighbours, Yugoslavia and Greece; and they are inspired by these neighbours' irrepressible resistance.

SOMETHING unheard of in the history of the Balkans has already resulted: Bulgarians and Rumanians, Hungarians and even Austrians, often enough in company or battalion formation under their own officers, have joined the ranks of the Yugoslav and Greek guerillas. Compared with that and its potential consequences, it is of minor importance that these Free Corps are somewhat disunited themselves, carrying regional and linguistic differences of former days into their present adventurous life and pledging their loyalty either to the Serbian General Mihailovich, or to the mysterious Croat "Tito," or to either of the Greek local captains, Katsokas or Hakaioi. The daring and the influence of these partisans turn the life of all Balkan quislings into a very hell. The Yugoslav Neditch, distrusted by his Nazi masters; the Greek Tsolakoglu, recently replaced by Field-Marshal List's ambitious niece and her husband, Logothetopulos; the Croat Pavelitch—hardly one of them who would not be glad to exchange his doubtful glory for a less transient, but secure, obscurity.

The Balkans used to be called a powder-barrel. More than ever before the description applies today when any spark of the war drawing nearer to the Peninsula might ignite it. But there is a new trend among the many races previously fighting none but one another—the feeling of a common brotherhood such as exists already among the ragged, half-starved warriors sweeping down from wooded mountains on Italian and German forces twenty times their numbers. The first tentative steps towards a Balkan Union, such as the Yugoslav-Greek federation agreed upon by the Governments-in-exile in London, may lead towards a better, a more united shape of Europe's south-east. And it may be that Hitler, willy-nilly, will have done something to forge that unity, to rekindle the Olympic fire from where, once, the flame of our civilization was lighted.

Brave Men of the Army: Some Recent Awards

Sgt. W. H. KIBBY (left), posthumously awarded the V.C. for displaying the utmost bravery on 3 separate occasions in New Guinea last Oct. He silenced enemy posts with hand grenades, and mended platoon-line communications, enabling mortar-fire to be directed against attacks on his Company's front. In wiping out a pocket of resistance behind enemy lines, he was killed by machine-gun fire as success seemed certain.

Pte. BRUCE KINGSBURY (right) of the Australian Army, posthumously awarded the V.C. During fighting in New Guinea last Aug. he cleared a path for his comrades by charging alone, Bren gun firing from the hip, through a network of Jap machine-gun posts. Coming through this ordeal unscathed, he swept Japanese positions with his fire, but was shot by an enemy sniper.

Capt. Rev. C. W. K. POTTS, of the Buffs, awarded the M.C. for displaying outstanding bravery and devotion to duty at El Alamein in the Western Desert last year. He showed fine qualities as a fighting officer. Originally an Army chaplin, he resigned to join up in the ranks, but he was soon commissioned again.

Lt.-Col. SMITH DORRIEN, of the Buffs, receiving the D.S.O. from Gen. Montgomery during the latter's visit to regiments of an Armoured Brigade in a forward position of the 8th Army. Many another officer and man was decorated at the same time for his share in the defeat of the Afrika Korps.

Sgt. E. J. GRAY, M.M., Royal Artillery, awarded the D.C.M. for saving his whole troop from a dangerous situation in Libya, by capturing 200 Italians in an enemy-held post. As he returned with his prisoners he was wounded. In the captured enemy post were found 3 anti-tank guns, 3 heavy machine-guns and many small arms.

Lt. C. G. ROB, R.A.M.C., awarded the M.C. After a flight of 350 miles, he performed 140 surgical operations in Tunisia. He and his surgical team were under fire most of the time. Rob followed our parachutists dropped to capture an airfield during November last year.

Maj. R. G. LODER-SYMONDS, R.H.A., awarded the D.S.O. and Bar, also the M.C.—all three being won in Libya. The M.C. was gazetted in 1941, the D.S.O. in Feb. 1942, and the Bar came 6 months later. He displayed great courage at Tobruk in Nov. 1941.

Col. FROST, M.C., awarded the D.S.O. for courageously leading his paratroops under heavy fire in Tunisia and reaching his objective. Although surrounded he extricated a large part of his unit, and regained his lines after a trek of 50 miles. He won the M.C. at Bruneval in Feb. 1942.

Photos, British Official; Crown Copyright; Sheffield Newspapers, News Chronicle, Planet News, Central Press

THE WAR IN THE AIR

by **Capt. Norman Macmillan, M.C., A.F.C.**

ON Sunday, February 14, 1943 German forces in Tunisia began a strong drive with armoured forces and lorry-borne infantry against the central front held by American troops who were thinned out lightly over the area.

The German air force in Tunisia had been strengthened by air units previously based in Tripolitania, and Luftwaffe strength was concentrated in support of the German ground thrust. A large proportion of the Luftwaffe's estimated first-line strength of 300 aircraft in Tunisia was thrown into the battle, and for a time the Germans had local air superiority.

On the first day about sixty dive-bomber sorties were made against the American forces by Junkers 87 Stukas, and about an equal number of fighter-bomber sorties were made by Messerschmitt 109 and Focke-Wulf 190 aircraft. (About 40 Stukas were employed.) On the second and subsequent days of the attack the Germans laid more emphasis on the fighter-bomber attacks ; from this it is reasonable to infer that there were fewer stationary targets after the first day, for the dive-bomber, a highly-specialized type of aircraft, is relatively at its best against fixed or slow-moving objectives.

IN the face of superiority in the air and superior forces on the ground the Americans were forced back. Gafsa was evacuated by February 16, and next day the aerodrome at Sbeitla and two other forward aerodromes at Thelepte (near Feriana) were overrun by German troops, after the Americans had destroyed or removed all the petrol stores and withdrawn to the rear all aircraft but those damaged beyond repair.

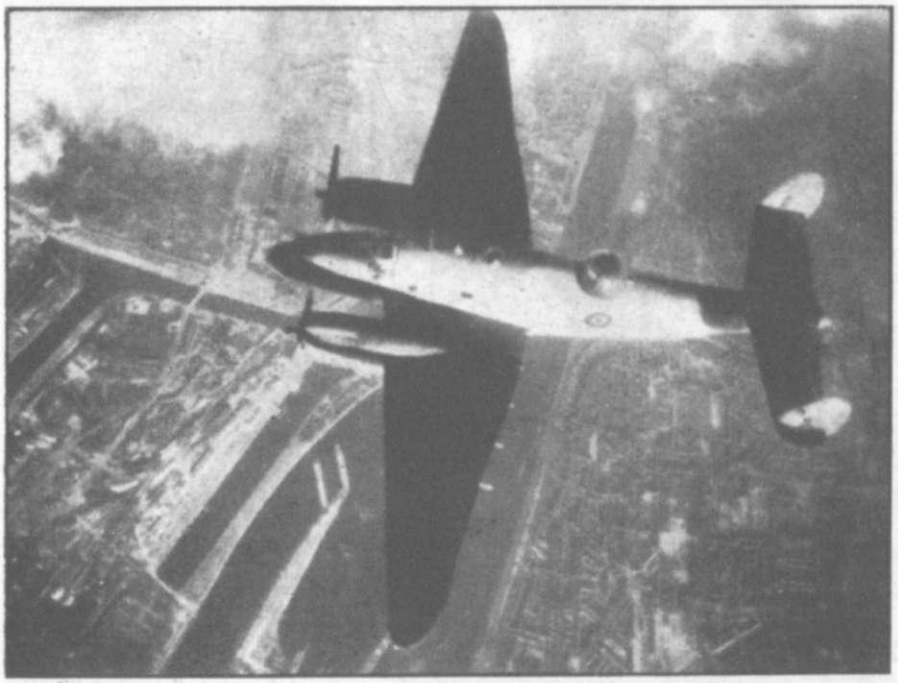
For a time it was not possible for the British armies and the Imperial and American air forces working with them to reach the area of fighting, and the Germans, continuing to advance, reached and captured the Kasserine Pass on February 20. Bad weather during this period of operations interfered with air activity which, on the Anglo-American side was confined to fighter offensive patrols against the enemy.

Coincidentally with the German attack, modifications in the Allied Commands which had been decided at the Casablanca Conference between President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill came into effect. Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Tedder arrived in North Africa by air from England on February 14, 1943 to take up his appointment as Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Air Forces in the Mediterranean ; accompanying him was Air Vice-Marshal Sir Arthur Coningham, who is to be responsible for operations in the field under General Carl Spaatz, U.S.A.A.F., who is responsible to A.C.M. Tedder for the direction of operations in North-West Africa.

The air forces attached to the British 1st and 8th Armies, the American Army, and those based in Malta, all came under Tedder's immediate command, and were swiftly concentrated upon the fighting area in Tunisia. All types of bomber were employed—fighter-bombers, medium bombers, and heavy types (Liberator and Fortress)—to pulverize the concentration of German troops in and around the Kasserine Pass, their lorries, tanks, guns, and lines of communication. From a position close to the Algerian town of Tebessa and the border town of Thala the enemy were driven back and thrust southward through the three-mile-wide valley of the Kasserine Pass on February 25 after a six days' engagement, during which Allied air cooperation rose to a scale not witnessed in Africa since the battle of El Alamein. The course of this action is the first proof that superiority in the air will be the deciding factor in Tunisia : whichever side loses that superiority will suffer reverses ; to expel the enemy entirely from North Africa will demand a considerable concentration of United Nations' air strength.

Present Japanese army air strength is estimated by Chungking at about 2,000 first-line aircraft with about 1,300 reserve aircraft ; the first-line aircraft, originally organized in five divisions of 500 aircraft, have been reorganized into four divisions. The disposition of these divisions is given as : one in Manchuria, one in Burma-Indo-China-Siam-Malaya, half a division in China, and the remainder in New Guinea, Formosa, and Japan. The Japanese naval air strength is estimated at 2,600 first-line and 1,700 reserve aircraft. The total losses in the Japanese air forces during 1942 were estimated at 3,600 first-line and 3,500 reserve aircraft. Another estimate of Japanese air losses in all theatres of war gives the figure of 2,435 aircraft, between February 15, 1942 (the date of the fall of Singapore) and January 31, 1943.

Japanese output of warplanes is estimated in Chungking at about 2,400 a year. These figures indicate that the direct bombing of Japan proposed by President Roosevelt would have a rapid effect upon the front-line air power of Japan. The depletion of Japanese air power by the bombing of factories, in addition to the losses incurred in the field, would have a great effect upon the United Nations speed of attack, for it has been demonstrated in every theatre of war that air superiority enables strong defences to be broken down more swiftly and this permits ground and sea actions to be made at a faster pace.



VENTURA OVER HOLLAND. On Feb. 13, 1943 a force of Bostons and Venturas attacked the important iron and steel works at Ijmuiden during the day without loss to themselves. The target is shown in the bottom left-hand corner of this photograph.

Photo, British Official : Crown Copyright

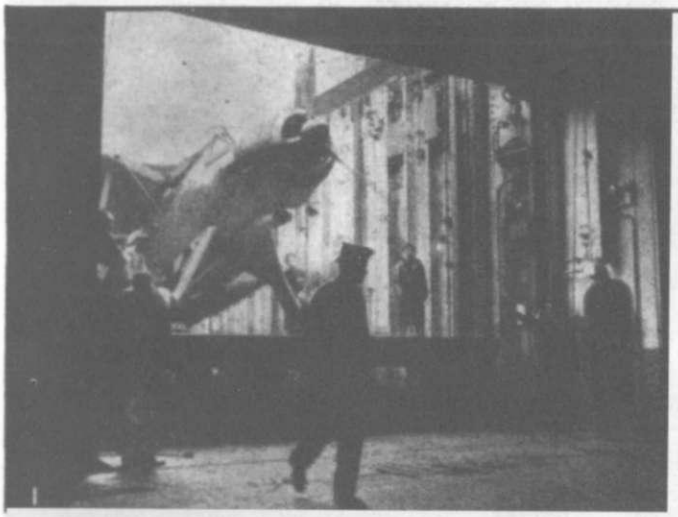
LUFTWAFFE Losses in Russia Assume Gigantic Total

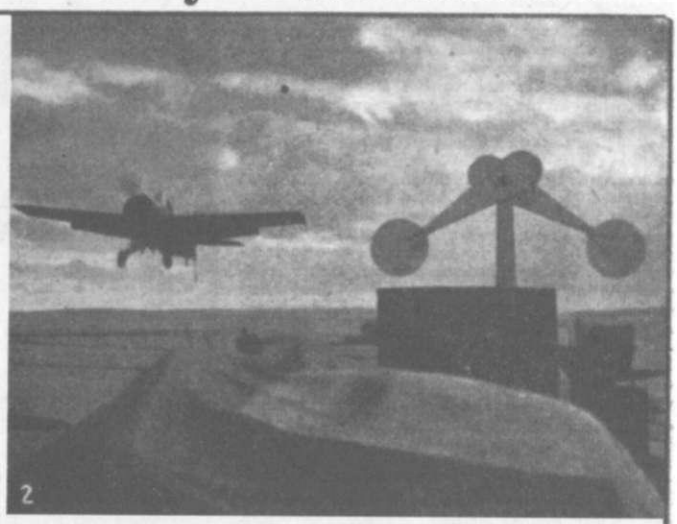
Air action on the Russian front continues in support of the opposing armies. The Luftwaffe is reported to be making considerable use of towed gliders for transporting supplies to the forward German troops, and it is thought that the serious losses in transport aircraft incurred by the Germans during the assault and defence of Stalingrad (and in the Mediterranean theatre of war) have caused a shortage of troop-transports. Gliders can be more quickly built, they are much less costly in labour man-hours, and they require no petrol, engine, or airscrew. In addition, their crews can be trained in a shorter time. Their extended use by the German army commanders indicates a compulsory economy due to pressure upon the German military machine from all directions. It is a sign that the all-round squeeze, by decimation on the fighting fronts, blockade by sea, and the bombing of Germany, is showing the trend of its ultimate and inevitable effect. Russia estimates that Germany has lost 4,000 aircraft in Russia since the summer of 1942. Meanwhile, Soviet bombers are bombing German lines of communication, breaking up the ice in the Kerch Straits, and combating the Luftwaffe in the air.

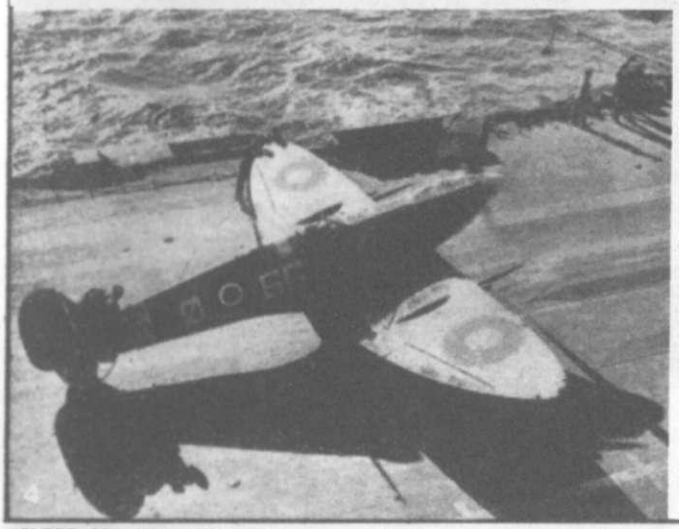
The day and night offensive against Germany is growing from United Kingdom bases, and it is probable that the early summer will see it rise to a new level of intensity. Fighter Command and Army Co-operation Command are taking an increasing part in the offensive.

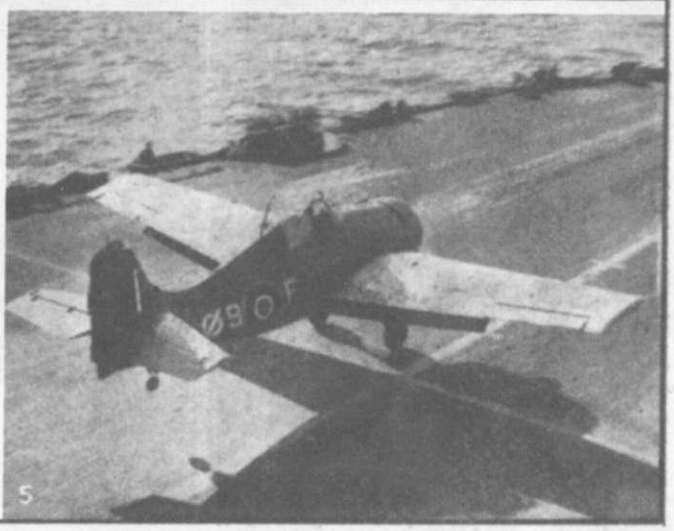
BOMBER Command attacked by day railway workshops and sheds at Tours (Feb. 14-15) ; targets in North-West Germany (Feb. 18) ; Den Helder docks (Feb. 19) ; Rennes rail yards and naval stores (Feb. 26) ; Dunkirk docks (Feb. 26 and 27) ; on these raids they lost three aircraft. Night attacks were made against Cologne, Milan, Spezia (Feb. 14-15) ; Belgium and West Germany (Feb. 15-16) ; Lorient (Feb. 16-17) ; Wilhelmshaven (Feb. 18-19, 19-20, 24-25) ; Bremen (Feb. 21-22) ; Nuremberg and W. Germany and minelaying (Feb. 25-26) ; Cologne (Feb. 26-27); N.W. Germany and minelaying (Feb. 27-28) ; on these raids 54 aircraft were lost. No aircraft were lost in the Bremen and last Wilhelmshaven raids; the last-named was made by a Canadian Bomber Group. Bombers of the U.S. Army 8th Air Force attacked Wilhelmshaven by day on Feb. 26, losing seven aircraft. Next day they attacked Brest without loss, but three covering fighters were lost.

Are the F.A.A. Planes Really Obsolescent?









FLEET AIR ARM planes have been criticized on the score of "obsolescence"; Mr. A. V. Alexander, First Lord of the Admiralty, recently said the work of their pilots, "with the old, slow, though pretty sound craft they have had, has been beyond reproach." Here are some of the machines with which the F.A.A. has already fought so magnificently. 1, An Albacore goes up in the lift from its hangar to the flight deck. 2, Martlet fighter about to land aboard the 23,000-ton Victorious. 3, Martlets stowed in the vast hangar below deck. 4, A Seafire fighter warms up. 5, Martlet taking off preparatory to a patrol flight. (See also illus. p. 609.)

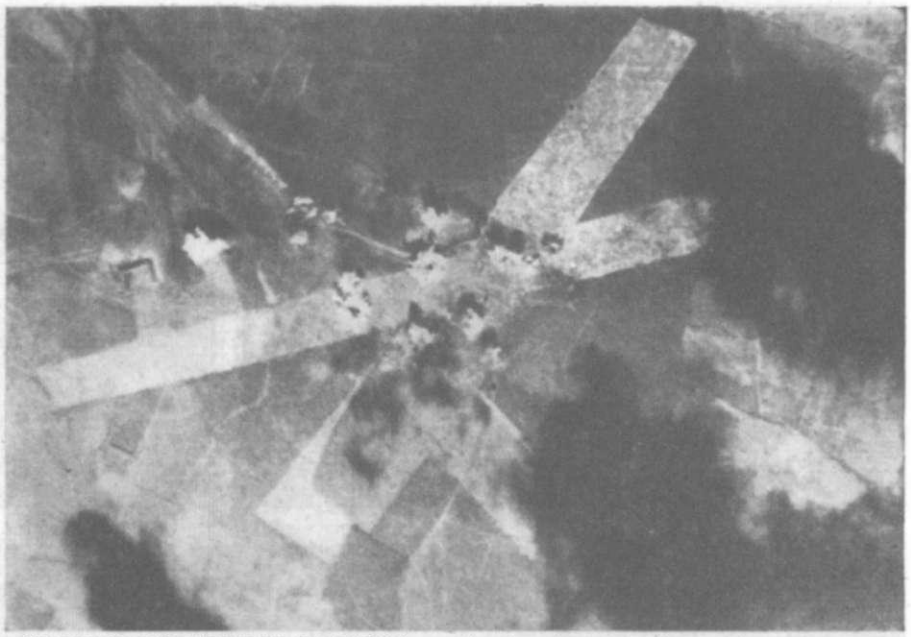
Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

From India Wavell's Men Move into Burma

WHY WE ARE INVADING ARAKAN

THE military operations in the Burmese maritime province of Arakan are the prelude to large-scale offensives to reconquer Burma, the key to the Orient. Since it occupies a highly strategic position in the Far East, Burma's reconquest is essential to the United Nations before any general counter-offensive can be launched against the Japanese on the Asiatic mainland. With Burma once again under the control of the Allied Powers, Japanese hold on the neighbouring countries would become precarious, the famous Burma Road would be reopened, and the Chinese would be free to complete the Burma-Yunnan railway, under construction at the time of the Japanese invasion of Burma last year. From Burma, combined American, British, and Chinese forces would be able to launch offensives against Siam and French Indo-China by way of the Kawkareik Pass and down southern Burma into Malaya.

Thus, as a preliminary to full-scale military operations to retake Burma, Field-Marshal Wavell has launched an attack against the Japanese in occupation of the Burmese coastal province of Arakan, which forms the eastern arm of the Bay of Bengal. Japanese forces in Arakan, with its strategic harbours and air bases, which are less than two flying hours away from Calcutta and the industrial centres of Bengal, where 70 per cent of India's war industries are to be found, constitute a threat to India, much more so than their presence in Northern Burma and the Chindwin Valley.

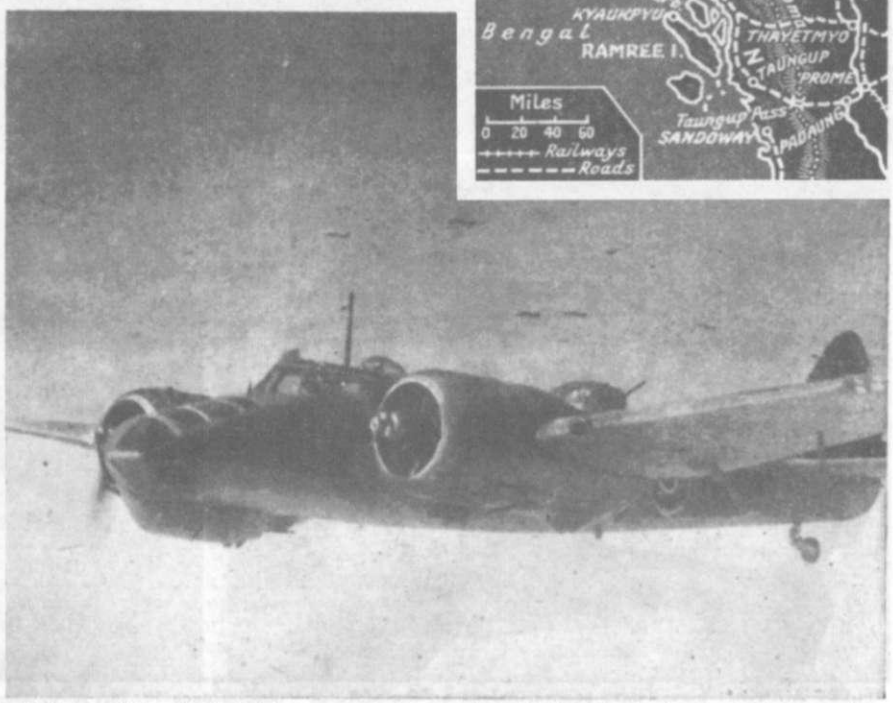


STRAFING JAP AIRFIELDS IN BURMA, our bombers have recently scored many successes against the enemy. This photo was taken as bombs burst across runway intersections on an airfield at Pakokku. Two hits have been obtained on aircraft shelters. Black patches indicate cloud shadows.

WAVELL'S immediate objective is Akyab, an important Japanese base situated at the mouth of the Kaladan River and only 65 miles to the south-south-west of Maungdaw, the Burmese frontier town, now in British hands. Several thrusts are being developed towards Akyab from Maungdaw and Buthidaung near the coast and on the Mayu River. But the main drive on Akyab is bound to be directed along the coastal track, supported by light naval forces from the sea, owing to the difficult nature of the country in Arakan, with ranges of forest-clad hills running north and south and sending out spurs and sub-spurs almost to the sea coast. The Arakan coastal strip is also intersected by a labyrinth of tidal creeks, and as a result has a highly developed system of inland waterways, which is the chief means of communication in this Burmese maritime province.

Seventy-five miles south-south-east by boat from Akyab is Kyaukpyu, situated on Ramree Island. Here the large expanse of water between Ramree Island and the mainland affords an excellent harbour, over 3 miles wide and 30 miles long, large enough to take the entire Japanese fleet. It would be surprising, indeed, if Kyaukpyu harbour and the deep, narrow, salt water tidal creeks in the mainland opposite, which are ideal for submarines, are not being used by the Japanese as a naval base.

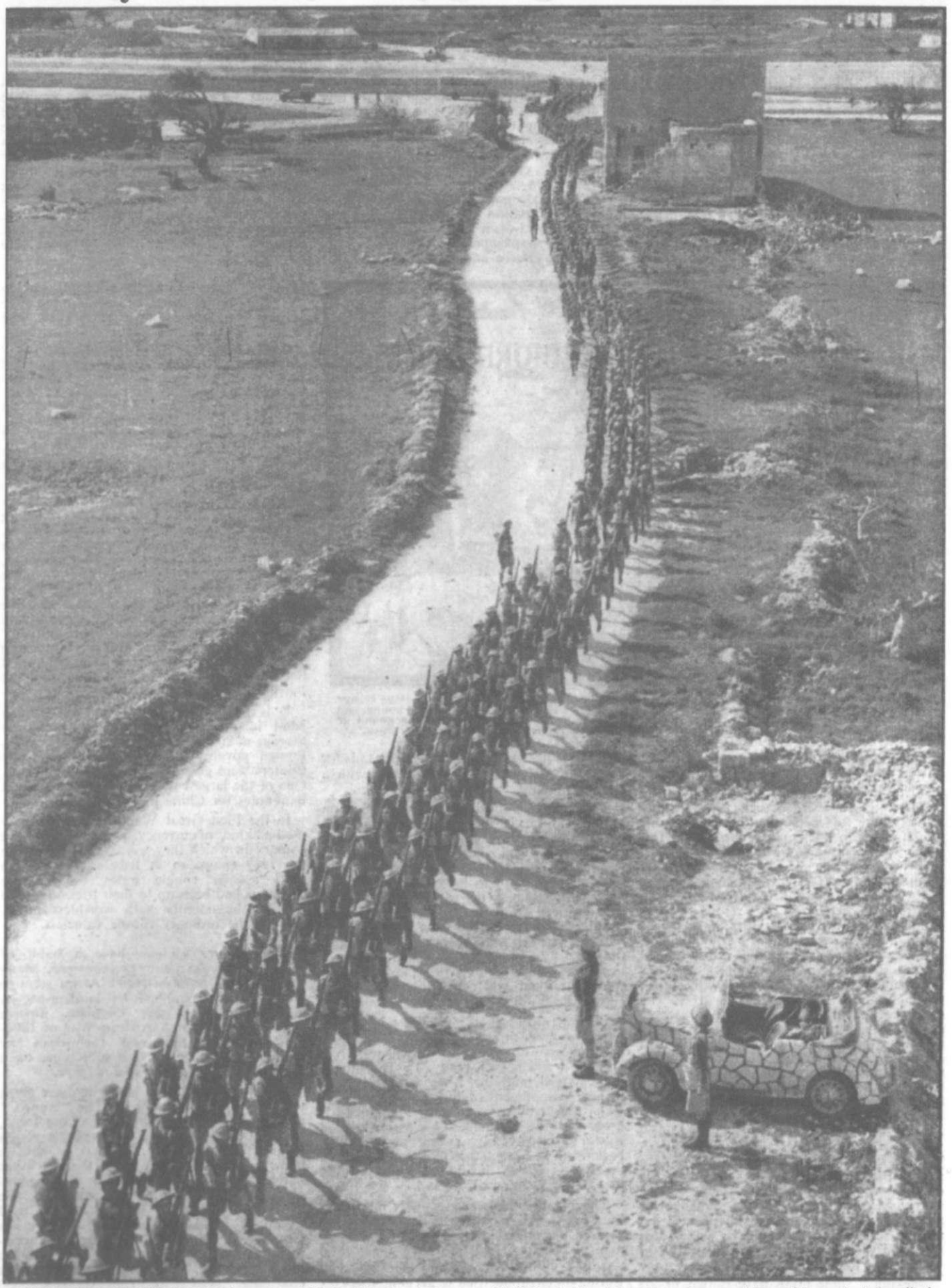
Occupation of Arakan, with its strategic air and naval bases at Akyab and Kyaukpyu, would not only remove the threat of a Japanese invasion of India ; it would also serve as a jumping-off ground for an attack on the heart of Burma and her capital of Rangoon. Though Arakan is isolated by the Yoma mountains from the rest of the country, there are two mountain passes, the An and the Taungup, which lead into the interior of Burma. A 100-mile-long motor road, one which has been greatly improved by the Japanese, runs through Taungup Pass, 2,800 feet above sea level, from Padaung on the River Irrawaddy to the near coastal town of Taungup. From these geographical details the importance of the present operations in Burma can be appreciated.



OUR BURMESE OFFENSIVE demands formidable fighting qualities from British troops. Left, men of an English North Country regiment wade through a jungle stream during a reconnaissance patrol. The map of the Arakan Province in N. Burma shows main strategic centres. Heavy raids have been directed against the port of Akyab. Right, aircraft of a Blenheim bomber squadron, with escorting Hurricanes in the background, on their way to attack enemy targets.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Indian Official

Victory March of Malta's Unbeatable Defenders



'THE FINEST IN THE WORLD' was how Malta's C.-in-C. and Governor, Field-Marshal Lord Gort (recently on a visit to this country), described British infantry in Malta. This photo shows Brigadier K. P. Smith, O.B.E., standing in front of his camouflaged car, taking the salute as a long column of British troops in Malta marches past.

Photo, Associated Press

How an Invading Army 'Pays Its Way'

Not the least of the signs of the most careful preparation of the North African expedition was the printing of a special supply of Bank of England notes for the use of the "invaders" in their dealings with the local administrations and the native inhabitants. This and other aspects of the military use of money are given in this article by J. M. MICHAELSON.

BRITISH soldiers in the First Army in North Africa are now being paid in francs, the currency of the country, but during their first weeks in Africa they used special notes printed in England to prevent the Germans "unloading" Bank of England notes which they have kept for just such an occasion. Some of these notes in German hands have been captured, others looted from banks in occupied countries, and others again, no doubt, confiscated from people interned. The introduction of new notes, completely different in appearance, effectively prevented the Germans getting rid of their notes and also made currency forgery, at which they are past masters, difficult.

'OCCUPATION MONEY' was specially printed by the Bank of England ready for issue to our landing-forces in N. Africa on Nov. 8, 1942. Notes ranged in value from a shilling to a pound, and at the time of issue the current rate of exchange was four American dollars to the pound or 300 Algerian francs. This shilling note bears the autographs of a landing-party at Oran.

The notes carried ashore by the invading armies were of denominations from one pound down to one shilling, the £1 and 10s. notes being of the same size as those used in Britain and the 5s. and 1s. notes rather smaller. The notes are freely changeable at 300 Algerian francs to the £ or four American dollars to the £. A 1s. note received in this country shows the chief feature is the device of a lion on a crown, familiar on our shillings. It bears in large letters the words Issued by the British Military Authority, and has the fine workmanship associated with British paper money. These notes had to be engraved and printed in the greatest secrecy some time in advance : and it is a testimony to the integrity of those engaged in this highly specialized business that, although the money must have passed through many hands before it reached North Africa, there was not even a hint of a rumour about it.

AN army entering a foreign country requires considerable sums to pay its soldiers. The Germans in all their advances have solved the problem with a simplicity only equalled by their unscrupulousness. They simply fix an arbitrary rate of exchange for the mark, impose the death penalty on anyone refusing to exchange or sell at this rate, and then dump unlimited quantities of notes on the country. Since the only "backing" these notes have is that of the press on which they are printed, and currency regulations prevent them circulating back to Germany, it is a small matter what rate of exchange is fixed, although, in fact, the rate has always been fantastic. This is, of course, pure looting and does not differ in principle from putting armed soldiers at the door of a shop and proceeding to remove its contents.

In most countries shopkeepers have naturally been reluctant to part with goods for these "occupation marks." Within 24 hours of occupation the order has gone out that shops must open and must sell. To the unfortunate shopkeepers of Belgium, France, Yugoslavia, Greece and other countries, the alternative has been to lose all their goods for marks or to lose them for nothing, with a beating into the bargain.

An American businessman wounded in an air raid during the Greek campaign and left behind in Athens, recently told of an experience which illustrated the German method. When he had recovered and secured permission to leave for the U.S.A., he decided to give his car to a Greek aid organization. But, realizing that it would simply be confiscated by the Germans, he decided to sell it to them and then give the Greeks the money. He visited the officer in Athens in charge of Army purchases and was astonished when his high price was accepted without the car even being looked at.

"I am afraid that we have not such a large sum in cash at the moment," the German officer said, "but if you will wait half an hour I will have it ready." The money duly arrived, and the American paid some formal compliment about efficiency, even when the banks were shut. "Banks!" exclaimed the German. "We don't need banks. We have a printing press in the basement." In fact, the German mechanized invasion columns include mobile printing presses for running off notes !

The Japanese have been equally unscrupulous. In the East Indies the advancing army secured considerable sums by forcing every man, woman and child to have a pass and pay 250 guilders for it, and in Malay and Burma the Japanese tried to get confidence for their notes by making them appear British.

The United Nations will never use such methods, for quite apart from the complete dishonesty of them, they are liable to recoil on the perpetrator. Germany is sowing the seeds of an eventual currency chaos even more disastrous than that which overtook her after the First Great War. The books made of 100,000,000 mark notes sold for a few pence by enterprising hawkers in Berlin as "souvenirs" of 1922 should have been a warning. A currency which has no backing but bayonets is liable to collapse when the bayonets are blunted.

THE methods used by the Allies to provide sufficient currency as one country after another is occupied will probably vary. But it is likely that they will err, if anything, on the side of financial orthodoxy. The U.S. forces in North Africa are also using specially printed U.S. currency to thwart the Germans. The notes were printed by order of the U.S. Treasury and cannot be used in any other part of the world. In addition, American pilots and the first troops to land carried gold coins from Canada and French francs for the persuasion of any who might be sceptical of the "almighty dollar"!

British troops in the East African campaign had a comparatively easy task in producing currency acceptable to the Abyssinians. The only coin universally used in Abyssinia has long been the silver Maria Theresa dollar, bearing the arms of Austria and the date 1780. It contains full value of silver. For many years the British Mint used to make these coins for Abyssinia. It was these dollars that British officers of secret "Mission 101" carried into the country. But it is interesting to note that at one time they ran out and had to borrow 6,000 silver dollars from the Patriot leader, Dejasmatch Nagash.

It is not widely known that the British Mint in normal times used to make an average of 20,000,000 coins a year for various foreign governments, and British specialist printers were given large contracts for notes. One of the largest was that for 1,000 million banknotes for China in 1939.

In the First Great War the British Army used all kinds of currency, generally that of the country in which they were fighting. But in the 1919 campaign in Russia they had to print special rouble notes because the Germans had been up to their tricks and had flooded the country with worthless notes, making the ordinary rouble valueless.

INCIDENTALLY, soldiers have a habit of keeping special money as a souvenir. Many of the British notes in North Africa seem to have been autographed by landing-parties and will probably never circulate. British soldiers in the South African War of 1899-1902 sometimes amused themselves by "improving" the portrait of Kruger on a shilling, adding a hat and a pipe.

The travels of the British Army have given us some of our money slang. The "tanner," according to one account, comes from India, where the troops found the tanga, a rough equivalent of sixpence. The ticky got its name in South Africa from the fact that native labourers were given a threepenny-piece in exchange for their wage tickets. The guinea was first coined in 1663 by the Royal Company of Adventurers on the Guinea Coast of Africa. Soldiers fighting on the continent in the 14th century may have brought back the slang "bob" from the French coin *bobe*. And if we like to go back 2,000 years, Roman soldiers introduced the word money into our language.

To These Our Roving Camera Pays Tribute

DAME KATHERINE JONES, D.B.E., R.R.C., Matron-in-Chief of Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service, is the first nurse to be gazetted Brigadier in the British Army. Members of the Q.A.I.M.N.S. (and of the Territorial Army Nursing Service now merged into it) suffer all the hazards of war. Since 1941 its sisters have been accorded military rank as officers.

LT. N. A. L. JEWELL (see pages 398, 486), captain of the British submarine which contributed to the success of the Allied N. African landings last November. In addition to valuable reconnaissance off the Algerian coast, he embarked General Giraud off the French shore, taking the French leader to the Mediterranean, where the General was transferred to a flying-boat.

MRS. BEATRICE HARRISON drives an L.M.S. van in the London district, and gave up her job as a tailoress in order to devote herself to this war work. Every day she and her horse journey through London's streets, collecting goods for dispatch by the L.M.S. Mrs. Harrison gained experience during the last war as a railway van-driver.

ADMIRAL AS SKIPPER'S MATE. A small vessel manned by a veteran crew of six has repeatedly carried out important coastal work. Former captain of the Renown, Sir Herbert Meade Featherstonhaugh serves as skipper's mate. Below, he is shown on the right; C. J. Burton, a dental surgeon (left), assists Capt. G. D. Begg, M.C., retired army officer, seen with broom, to "clean up the ship."

ENGLAND'S OLDEST SWORD-MAKER, Mr. T. Beasley (centre), aged 82, has worked with the same firm for 56 years. He is at present busily engaged in making bayonets and Commando knives, an occupation to which he applied himself in the last war. The craft of sword-making has been handed down in his family for over 250 years. He is here shown engaged in testing a bayonet.

SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS, Minister of Aircraft Production, addresses workers at one of the Ministry's factories during a recent visit in the London district. Sir Stafford was appointed Minister of Aircraft Production in Nov. 1942, when he relinquished the Leadership of the House of Commons.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright; Topical Press, Central Press, Planet News, Daily Mirror

I WAS THERE! Eye Witness Stories of the War

I Had a Live Shell in My Leg—and Didn't Know It

One of the most extraordinary experiences of the War fell to the lot of H. J. Coates, of Islington. A 20-year-old Probationary Electrical Mechanic in the Royal Navy, he has written this story of his amazing escape from death specially for THE WAR ILLUSTRATED.

Mr. H. J. Coates, whose nerve-racking experience during a South Coast raid is told in this page. Skilful surgery and great fortitude brought him through his ordeal.

LIFE was placid enough at the training school in a South Coast town until that Monday morning when, having nothing in particular to do for a few minutes, I strolled along to the "local" and there met some of my pals. One of them had a telegram in his hand and joy written all over his face. The telegram announced that he had become a father—a fine bouncing boy. That called for congratulations and drinks, and we were about to celebrate when, above the buzz of talk, we heard the hum of a plane and the roar of A.A. gunfire.

Then came the shattering of glass and we flung ourselves flat to the deck, or rather the floor. There followed a short burst of what I took to be machine-gun fire and I felt a sudden sharp twitch in my right leg. Looking down, I was amazed to see a hole just above my knee. I thought I had been hit by a piece of flying glass or something, but I felt no pain—just the sudden twitch. I tried to get up, but my leg wouldn't work. I turned on my side to see if any of the boys had been hit: and there was my best pal, face downwards, with blood streaming from a big wound in the back of his head.

I let out one yell, and someone came along, lifted me on to a trolly and wheeled me to the sick bay. Others attended to my pal. In the sick bay, whilst they were dressing my leg and putting a splint on it, I asked what had happened to Andy, the proud father whose health we had been about to drink. They told me he had escaped without a scratch and that, fortunately, there were not many casualties. I still did not know what had happened to my leg, and no one told me.

The dressing completed, we—the casualties—were driven in an ambulance to the Royal County Hospital, Brighton. At the hospital they lost no time in getting to the bottom of my mystery. They took an X-ray photograph of my leg, and when they showed me the plate I got the shock of my life.

For I realized then that nothing so commonplace as a bit of flying glass had hit me. It wasn't even a bullet. It was an aero-cannon shell, about three inches long and three-quarters of an inch in diameter, buried deeply in the flesh. The officer in charge of a Bomb Disposal Unit, called in for consultation, identified it as of the armour-piercing variety which explodes on impact; there were suspicions that it might even be a sub-variety whose explosion is delayed. So I had been harbouring live ammunition in my leg for at least two hours! I think the doctors were not a little astonished, too, but they made no fuss about it.

They wheeled me into the operating theatre and prepared me for the operation which would result in the safe removal of the shell, or—disaster. It was liable to explode at any moment. They told me afterwards that if it had exploded my leg would have been shattered and I might possibly have "gone West." The surgeon and his assistant, the anaesthetist and the nurses, all faced very considerable risk. At the least they might have been blinded. But they just ignored that and got on with the job. I've asked myself several times since if I would have had the pluck to do what they did.

I was under the anaesthetic, of course, and knew nothing of what was going on. They tell me the shell was lodged very tightly, near the knee joint, and that the surgeon had to do some cautious tugging to get it out. First he had to work down to the base of it, and then pull. It took him half an hour to complete the operation, described later by the Chairman of the hospital as "the most delicate and the most dangerous of his (the surgeon's) career." When at last the surgeon held the live shell in his hand it was passed over to the bomb disposal squad that had been standing by in readiness.

When I opened my eyes again I was in a big ward, in a nice warm bed, with a rather stiff right leg and a slight headache, but otherwise none the worse for the experience. My first thought was of my pal who had been wounded in the head. I asked how he was, and they told me he was very bad. Poor chap, he died in the hospital that night. I was the lucky one.

I Saw Our Shells Bounce off a German 'Tiger'

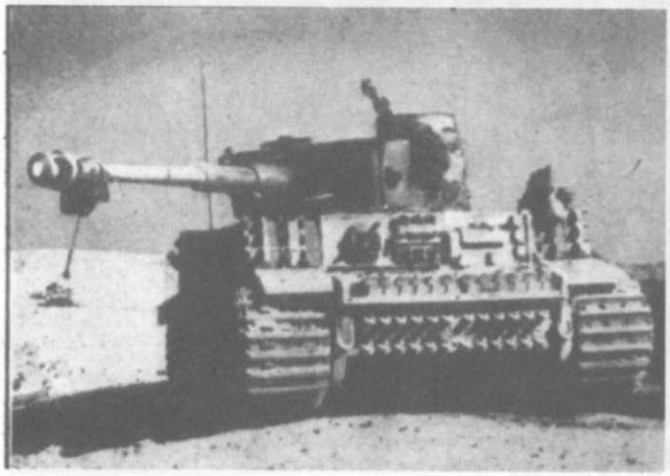
This "story in a nutshell"—an incident in the fighting between a British composite force of tanks guns and infantry, and Rommel's troops driving towards Thala—is told by Alan Humphreys, Reuters Special Correspondent on the Tunisian front.

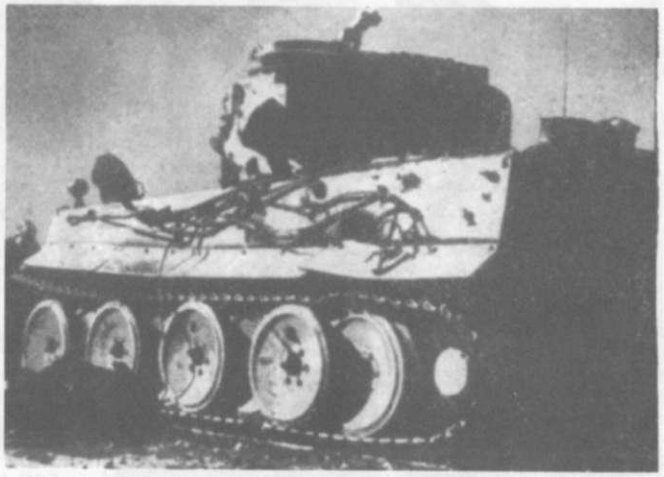
WE held our positions on high ground north of the Kasserine Pass until dusk, when we were ordered to withdraw because the Germans were "winkling us out."

As we did so the enemy fired everything they had at us, including 105-millimetre guns. The shelling was very heavy and accurate. Later, undeterred by heavy rain, German tanks penetrated the pass and advanced towards Thala, some 40 miles to the north-west, headed by a number of "Tiger" tanks.

Though the moon was at full, rainclouds had reduced visibility, adding to the difficulties of the anti-tank gunners. To ensure that he was not firing at our own tanks, the British battery commander went out ahead of our guns.

A tank approached along the road, but rattled to a stop at the British officer's command: "Halt!" The officer then identified a German Mark VI (Tiger) tank. "Fire!" he shouted to his battery, at the same time diving for a ditch. One man jumped from the Tiger tank and also dived into the ditch at the same moment as the British officer. Each went a different way





GERMAN 'TIGER' (MARK VI) TANK, referred to in this and the following page, is armed with an 88-mm. gun and two 7·92-mm. machine-guns. These photographs of one captured in Tunisia, show (left) the enemy practice of fixing old or spare tracks across the front of the tank to provide extra protection. Right, side view showing use of overlapping bogie wheels in suspension. The complete tank weighs over 55 tons. *Photos, British Official*

however, the British officer dashing back towards his guns and the German racing to the tanks following up behind.

The battery, although only at 40 yards range, fired five rounds before the remainder of the crew of the Tiger tank jumped out. One gunner, speaking of the action, told me: "The first shell from our six-pounder bounced off and went straight up in the air. I followed its flight, but I could not see the rest. I think several other shells also just bounced off the Tiger tank."

We Were the American 'Lost Legion' in Tunisia

Surrounded by Nazi tanks in Southern Tunisia, a "lost" American battalion was led for more than nine miles through the enemy lines and back to its own base by Major Robert R. Moore, of Vallisca, Iowa, who told to Reuters Special Correspondent, Alan Humphreys, this story of how it was done.

WE were holding positions on the Djebel Lessouda—just north of Lesouda, about 25 miles east of Sbeitla—when the Germans threw more than 100 tanks round us in the dawn attack they launched on Sunday, February 7. We were well dug in, and for three days we stuck there. We beat off several attacks, did not suffer a single casualty, and captured some prisoners.

These included a German captain. "My comrades will soon come," he told me. "There is nothing for you to do except surrender." He is still a prisoner, and I should like to see his face now. By Tuesday evening we had eaten all our food. Ammunition was perilously short, when an American plane swooped over us and dropped a long yellow streamer. Inside was an order from the commander telling us to withdraw during the night to a point where protection and guides would be waiting.

The battalion moved out during the night and marched along a road. A sentry rose from a slit trench and challenged us at one place, but I did not answer. I just kept on, and he apparently assumed that such a large force so far behind the German front could only be Germans, and he got back into his trench. I had given instructions to the leading troops not to fire in any circumstances for fear of prejudicing the chances of escape of those behind.

We reached the rendezvous and I was looking around when I was challenged. It was an unpleasant sound. The Germans had got there before us. I did not answer and went back to the column, where an officer asked: "Who was it?" I told him, and gave the order to keep going. We went on. We were challenged again, and still I did not answer.

Then machine-guns opened up and hit the middle of one company, who suffered about twenty-five casualties. The Germans began firing along the ditches, so the officer commanding the following company led his men down the middle of the road. All came through untouched.

The next company had gone to the right and came past without even being fired at. Finally we caught up our protection and guides. I heard the familiar challenge, and asked "Are you American?" The reply came back: "Are you that infantry outfit?" I said "We are, and I'm glad to find you!"

Hole No. 37 Was Her Address in Stalingrad

In a hole in the ground between two Armies lived one of the heroic women of Stalingrad - the washerwoman of No-man's-land. Her simple, tragic story is told by Paul Holt, War Correspondent of The Sunday Express, and reprinted here from that newspaper. For the story of the Battle of Stalingrad see page 590.

I REMEMBER it was just about the time I began to look at the ground as I walked along. When you are sick of a sight you look at the ground and that way it seems a quicker journey. A tired man does that. I was tired. Tired of looking at the savaged ruins of Stalingrad, tired of registering on the retina shock after shock of the power and terror and pity. The power of blast, the terror of the shapelessness of common things, the pity of scraps of household intimacies.

It was just about then that I noticed a stick standing upright in the rubble. It had a cardboard notice on it which said, very firmly and boldly, as if nothing had ever happened to Stalingrad, "Hole No. 37." You might imagine a postman trudging along as I was trudging, stopping and dropping in a letter at "Hole No. 37."

The road I was trudging was no road at all. It was a crooked, tortured track beaten out between shell craters and rusty iron sheets that might once have been tramped by the patient feet of an army under siege.

Tramping at night only, for this track lay between the Russian and German front lines, and led through a narrow No-man's-land between Stalingrad's great hill, the Mamai Kourgan, and the consumer goods building of the Red October factory, where Rodimtsev's Guardsmen fought the Battle of Garden Spades.

Just then a woman's head appeared beside the little stick that said "Hole No. 37." Behind her came two children, one a girl of three, all muffled up in a white woolly cap with flaps like a Belgian rabbit's ears, another little girl, dark and solemn, about five. The woman went towards the washing that hung on the line, frozen stiff and flapping in the bitter breeze like three-ply boards in a gale. The little girls ran up towards a toy sledge.

We stopped and talked to the woman. She answered in monosyllables, and her voice had that tone that women put on when they talk of the imbecility of men. Yes, she had been there all the time. It was terrible. Yes, it was very difficult to live. Her husband was in the army. She had kept her children with her because there was no time to send them away.

But why did she stay? Why did she live for five months in a hole in the ground between two armies, and why was it postmarked "Hole No. 37"? Her answer was very feminine. She was doing washing for the Red Army.

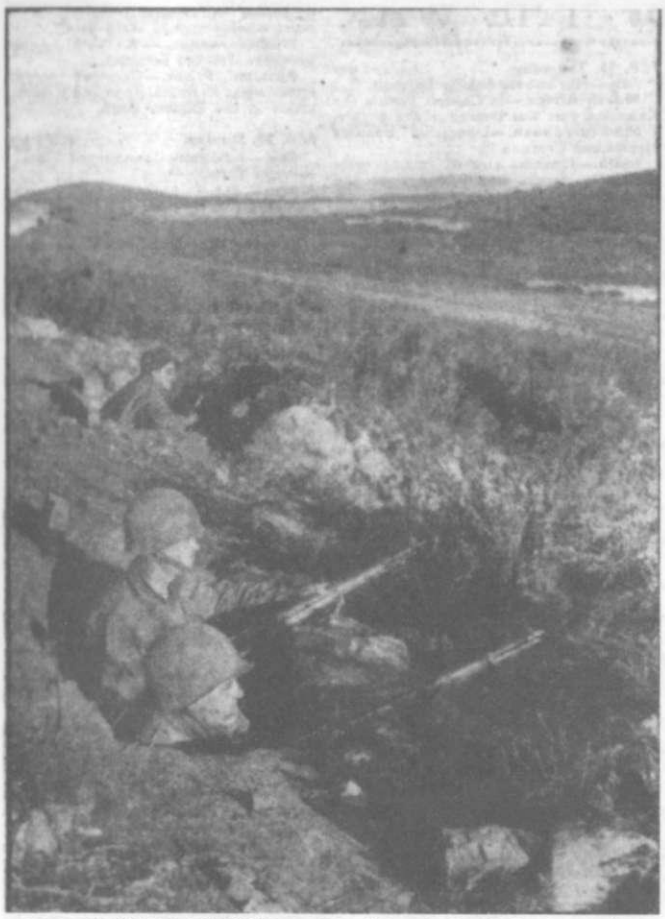
I said to the Red Army major who was our conducting officer: "This is Hole No. 37. How many such holes are there in Stalingrad?" He shrugged his shoulders. There were many, he said. In that long walk to the Red October factory I did not see another.

The last Russian encyclopedia gave the population of Stalingrad as a quarter of a million. Since that date, with the growth of industrialization, the figure must have grown towards 400,000 by the time the Germans began to creep towards the Volga last summer.

HOW many are left? There was, of course, in the early days before Stalingrad was "Rotterdammed" on August 23, 1942, evacuation. This was not an organized business of trainloads of people being taken to the rear. Those who wanted to go were ferried across the Volga, then set out to walk with their bundles, their children and their old folk, across the flat San Steppe, where only occasional mud-houses and little tin windmills of the artesian wells break the flat, brown expanse.

Many stayed—some to carry on working at the great factories, some because simply they did not wish to go. The workers joined home guard battalions and fought with the Red Army in the bad days of September and October.

Where have they gone? In four days at Stalingrad, touring the city on foot and in ambulance lorries, I saw perhaps 50 people. I do not think there can be more than 500 people living there still. Those who do live have dug themselves into the sandstone



IN SOUTHERN TUNISIA, a U.S. "lost legion," fought against desperate odds in the Sbeitla region. Their experiences are recounted in this page. Here is the type of slit-trench, a fox-hole," which formed part of their defences on the Djebel Lessouda.

WHILE THE BATTLE RAGED Russian women and children in the Stalingrad area, who had eluded German labour-camps, in many cases lived in damp, unlighted dug-outs and caves. As told in this and the previous page, living conditions were appalling, yet Stalingrad's heroic women battled on. This photograph shows a group of women and children calmly awaiting news during the fateful days of the great siege of the city.
Photo, Planet News

cliff along the Volga bank or into the deep sandstone ravines that run through the town.

There are three main ravines—Bath-house Gully, the Long Gully and Steep Gully. Looking down into these gullies, where some of the fiercest fighting of the whole battle took place, for they were royal routes for the Germans to the Volga, I saw a few clusters of cave homes with stoves smoking and washing hanging out.

The main impression I gained of those gullies is as if some bad-tempered giant had tipped up Father Christmas's sack, spilled out all his dolls' houses, then stamped on them. When General Rokossovsky threw his ring around the German Sixth Army it stretched for 50 miles one way and 30 miles another. In that ring, so I learned from General Kotelkov, it was estimated that there were living 50,000 to 60,000 Russian civilians. Living in holes in the ground off food they had buried before the Germans came.

I asked another Russian officer what he calculated had become of those 60,000 Russian folk. He said: "We don't know yet how many have survived." And then he said laconically: "At one place, just beyond Gumrak, when our men were driving forward, they came across a prison camp. It was just barbed wire and snow. In that camp they found 5,000 Red Army men and civilians dead from hunger and cold."

When the war is over this will be one of the crimes that will have to be answered by Hitler and his instrument, Field-Marshal Frederick von Paulus. And not the least of those either will have to answer will be the woman who stayed to do her washing in "Hole No. 37."

OUR DIARY OF THE WAR

FEB. 17, 1943, Wednesday *1,264th day*

North Africa.—Feriana, Kasserine and Sbeitla in Central Tunisia occupied by forward Axis troops; airfields at Sbeitla and Thelepte evacuated by U.S. forces.

Mediterranean.—Allied bombers raided airfields in Sardinia.

Russian Front.—In the Ukraine Soviet troops occupied Slavyansk.

Australasia.—U.S. aircraft attacked Munda and Kolombangara.

China.—Japanese landed in Kwangchowwan, S. China, and attacked also in Hupeh, Kwangsi, Kwangtung and Kiangsu.

FEB. 18, Thursday *1,265th day*

Air.—Mosquitoes raided Tours; heavy night raid on Wilhelmshaven.

North Africa.—Troops of 8th Army occupied Foum Tatahouine in S. Tunisia and island of Djerba off the coast.

Russian Front.—Soviet troops captured Zalegoshch in Orel region.

Australasia.—Enemy aircraft flew over Sydney area.

U.S.A.—American warships shelled Japanese bases on Attu, Aleutians.

Home Front.—Labour amendment to Government statement on Beveridge Report defeated by 336 votes to 119.

FEB. 19, Friday *1,266th day*

Air.—Den Helder docks attacked by day; another heavy night raid on Wilhelmshaven.

Mediterranean.—Allied heavy bombers attacked airfields in Crete.

Russian Front.—Road and rly. from Kursk to Kharkov cleared of enemy.

Burma.—U.S. aircraft raided Lashio.

Australasia.—Fortresses and Catalinas raided Buin, Solomons.

FEB. 20, Saturday *1,267th day*

North Africa.—Germans occupied Kasserine Pass in Central Tunisia. In the south, the Eighth Army occupied Medenine without opposition.

Mediterranean.—U.S. heavy bombers made daylight raid on Naples and Crotone; Palermo harbour bombed by night.

Russian Front.—Soviet troops occupied Krasnograd and Pavlograd in the Ukraine.

FEB. 21, Sunday *1,268th day*

Sea.—Admiralty announced loss of corvette Samphire. U.S. Navy Dept. announced that Argonaut, largest American submarine, was missing, presumed lost.

Air.—R.A.F. made heavy night attack on Bremen without loss.

North Africa.—Germans launched attacks through Kasserine Pass towards Thala, Tebessa and Sbiba.

Mediterranean.—Allied aircraft raided harbour of Melos, Greece.

FEB. 22, Monday *1,269th day*

Sea.—U.S. Navy Dept. announced that 850 persons were missing from two U.S. liners torpedoed in N. Atlantic.

North Africa.—In Central Tunisia enemy launched another attack towards Tebessa, but were held by British and U.S. troops.

Burma.—British troops made raid from sea on Myebon, Arakan coast.

U.S.A.—American aircraft raided Jap positions at Kiska, Aleutians.

FEB. 23, Tuesday *1,270th day*

North Africa.—U.S. and British troops forced enemy withdrawal in Kasserine area in Central Tunisia.

Russian Front.—Soviet troops occupied Sumi, W. of Kharkov, and Malo-Arkhangelsk, on Kursk-Orel railway.

India.—Enemy bombers attacked American air base in N.E. Assam.

FEB. 24, Wednesday *1,271st day*

Air.—Wilhelmshaven again raided.

Russian Front.—Soviet troops continued to progress in N. Ukraine against heavier German resistance.

General.—Ribbentrop arrived in Rome on four-day visit.

FEB. 25, Thursday *1,272nd day*

Air.—Nuremberg heavily bombed.

North Africa.—In Central Tunisia the Kasserine Pass was cleared of the enemy.

Mediterranean.—Liberators bombed Naples and Crotone.

India.—Japanese aircraft raiding aerodrome in Assam, lost 9 destroyed and 20 probably destroyed by U.S. fighters.

Australasia.—U.S. aircraft again bombed Rabaul and Kolombangara.

FEB. 26, Friday *1,273rd day*

Sea.—Enemy tanker sighted in Bay of Biscay by Liberator of Coastal Command was sunk by H.M.S. Sussex. Admiralty announced loss of trawlers Bredon and Tervani.

Air.—U.S. Fortresses and Liberators raided Wilhelmshaven by day; R.A.F. made three attacks on Dunkirk; heavy night raid on Cologne.

North Africa.—In Northern Tunisia Axis attacked at many points along our front; in the south, forward elements of the Eighth Army reached Mareth Line.

Mediterranean.—Docks at Cagliari, Sardinia, raided by Allied bombers.

Burma.—Enemy transports attacked and prisoners taken in small naval action off Arakan coast.

FEB. 27, Saturday *1,274th day*

Air.—Dunkirk docks and airfield at Maupertuis, Cherbourg, raided by R.A.F., and Brest by U.S. aircraft in daylight.

North Africa.—U.S. troops occupied Kasserine in Central Tunisia; in the north enemy attacks were held.

Mediterranean.—Allied fighter-bombers attacked Syracuse.

Russian Front.—Germans counter-attacking at Kramatorskaya and Krasnoarmeisk in the Donetz Basin.

FEB. 28, Sunday *1,275th day*

Sea.—Admiralty announced loss o corvette Erica.

Air.—R.A.F. bombers again raided Maupertus airfield by day; heavy night raid on St. Nazaire.

North Africa.—Enemy attack repulsed near Beja, in North Tunisia.

Mediterranean.—Flying Fortresses made daylight raid on Cagliari, Sardinia.

Russian Front.—Fierce battle round Kramatorskaya still in progress.

MARCH 1, Monday *1,276th day*

Air.—Berlin had its biggest air attack of the war.

North Africa.—In Central Tunisia Sbeitla was re-occupied by Allied forces; enemy attacks in the north died down.

Mediterranean.—U.S. bombers raided Naples and made two attacks on Palermo.

Russian Front.—Announced that in new offensive Marshal Timoshenko had captured Demyansk and other places in Lake Ilmen region, on northern front.

Burma.—U.S. aircraft bombed Gokteik viaduct, on Mandalay-Lashio railway

Australasia.—Announced from Gen. MacArthur's H.Q. that air reconnaissance had revealed growing enemy strength in islands north of Australia.

MARCH 2, Tuesday *1,277th day*

Air.—R.A.F. bombers raided targets in Western Germany.

North Africa.—New enemy attack developed in Sejenane area of Northern Tunisia. Allied aircraft bombed targets at Tunis and near Mareth.

Mediterranean.—Fighter-bombers from Malta attacked Lampedusa aerodrome.

Australasia.—Allied bombers began attack on Japanese convoy in Bismarck Sea off New Guinea; four ships sunk or damaged. Jap fighters raiding aerodrome at Port Darwin were intercepted by Spitfires now operating in Australia.

General.—Italian Eighth Army returned home from the Russian front.

Flash-backs

1940

February 23. *Russians began heavy attack on Viipuri in Finland.*

February 25. *First squadron of Royal Canadian Air Force arrived in England.*

1941

March 1. *Bulgaria joined the Axis; German troops marched into Sofia and Varna.*

1942

February 19. *First Jap raids on Port Darwin, Northern Australia.*

February 20. *Japanese invaded Bali, Dutch E. Indies, after sea and air battle.*

February 24. *In Burma Imperial forces withdrew across Sittang river.*

February 27. *Battle of Java Sea began; Allies lost cruisers Exeter, Perth, Houston, Java and De Ruyter and six destroyers.*

February 28. *Combined Operations raid on Bruneval, Normandy.*

March 1. *Japanese landed at three points in Java, Dutch E. Indies.*

Editor's Postscript

ONE of the first Nazi planes to cross the coast of Kent in the Battle of Britain in August 1940 dropped, not bombs, but a hundredweight of papers, copies of Hitler's Reichstag speech in which he made his "Last Appeal to Reason," urging Britain to cease hostilities. "I am not in the position of the vanquished begging pardons," he said, "but the victor speaking in the name of reason." That Nazi airman selected his target with a nice discrimination. The bale of papers fell on Barming Mental Hospital . . . For this delightful little incident I am indebted to a book written by a fellow scribe: Hell's Corner, 1940, by H. R. Pratt Boorman, Editor-Proprietor of the Kent Messenger (Kent Messenger, Maidstone, 7s. 6d.). Every Man of Kent and Kentish Man will be proud to read this first-hand, carefully documented, and excellently illustrated story of how the Garden of England became the Battlefield of Britain. Kent is fortunate in the possession of so able and painstaking an historian; it is to be hoped that all the counties, all our battered cities and towns, will be so favoured. For this is the sort of history that matters, both to the men and women who have lived through these storm-flecked days and still more to the generations who are to come.

ON every page there is some hero's name, as often as not some heroine's. It does one good to read how the people, the ordinary people, of Kent stood up to the battle. Hundreds were killed or wounded; nearly every town and village had its scars. But through it all "with patriotism and good humour they defied the enemy." Particularly notable are the tributes paid by Mr. Pratt Boorman to the transport workers, the railwaymen, the bus drivers, conductors and conductresses, many of whom were killed or injured. When Gillingham bus garage was heavily bombed a sailor did good work. He could not drive, but he got in a bus and started it up. Cannoning off one or two, he got the bus out; but when he reached the road he could not stop. So he brought it to a standstill by running it into a telephone kiosk. Then he went back for another. After about fifty of the buses had been got out the unknown sailor disappeared into the night. Another of Mr. Pratt Boorman's vivid glimpses is of Coxswain Knight and his crew in the Ramsgate lifeboat crossing the Channel from Dunkirk, towing behind them wherries in which, in the course of forty hours' continuous service, they brought off about 2,800 men from that stricken beach. Coxswain Parker and the Margate crew in like manner brought off load after load, under continuous shelling, bombing, and aerial machine-gun fire. "An inspiration to us all as long as we live," was how the commander of a destroyer expressed it when he wrote his appreciation to the Lifeboat Institution.

HUNDREDS of planes crashed in Kent during those hectic weeks and thousands of bombs were dropped; yet, taking it all in all, the casualties were by no means in proportion. Which reminds me of what a rural policeman told me the other day. In the area comprised by his "beat," a matter of some five or six miles square, containing ten or a dozen little villages, over 160 H.E. bombs have been dropped since the War began. Material damage was slight; the only casualty 'one soldier home on leave who lost a leg!

So the old Cunard-White Star liner Majestic has been raised and brought inshore from the deep waters of the Firth of Forth in which she sank when she took fire some time ago. Already 13,000 tons of steel have been cut from her carcass, and at least another 25,000 tons will be salvaged. Many another sunken ship has been saved, the total thus salvaged to date providing iron and steel sufficient (we are told) to build a dozen cruisers. One of the ships sunk off the west coast of Scotland had a cargo consisting in large measure of bottles of whisky. With a truly Scottish acumen, which I am quick to appreciate, the local crofters scented out the wreck before the salvage men could get there. The resulting atmosphere was highly convivial. But, talking of salvage, I could give directions how to reach a certain Sussex common where I saw some Bren carriers refuelling the other day, and passing later observed that they had kindly left nearly a score of empty two-gallon petrol tins which are still there—excepting only those that villagers may have put to better use as vessels for water carrying. I am told they are quite serviceable as pails when the top has been removed. But is this in accord with our ideas of salvage? Should not our mechanized army be made to deposit its empties where they would be of use to the War effort, rather than turn rural commons into unsightly dumps of dirty tin cans?

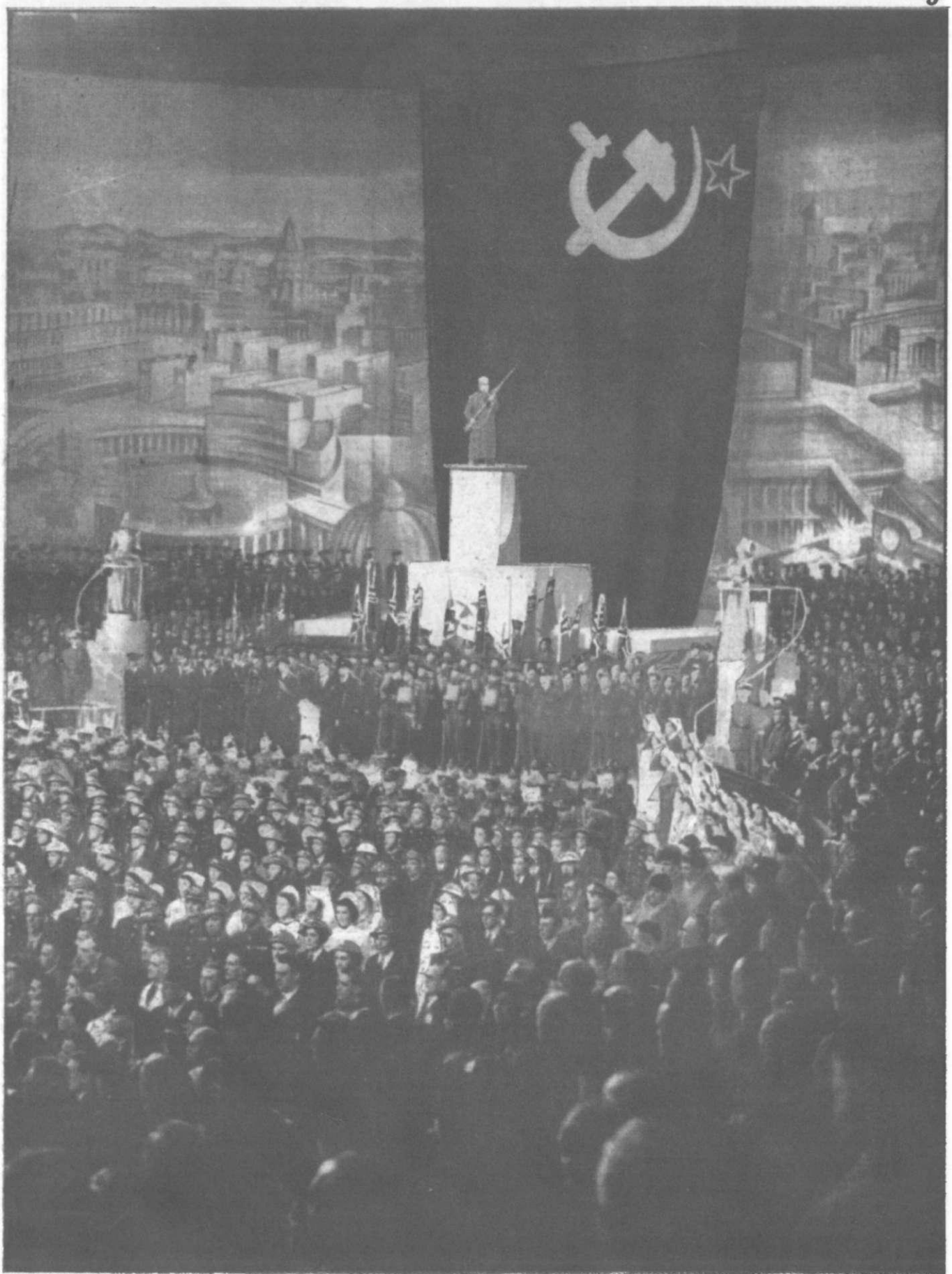
F/L. K. KUTTELWASCHER, D.F.C. and bar, intrepid Czech airace, whose exploits as a "night intruder" have achieved remarkable results over enemy territory. On July 30, 1942 he received the Czechoslovak War Cross for the fifth time.
Drawn by Eric Kennington, Crown Copyright reserved

IN future, we are told, small cheque-books are to be the rule. A considerable saving in paper is anticipated, since many million cheques are made out in the course of a year. But the smaller cheque has at least one drawback in that the space for the payee's name is somewhat reduced. And how long some payees' names are! In their nomenclature most of the banks have now attained to a sweet simplicity: we no longer have The London Joint City and Midland, or the National Provincial and Union Bank of England. Some of the insurance companies, too, whose full titles tell of a history of amalgamation, have adopted shorter forms for the convenience of premium payers, although we still have a few such centipedes as The National Employers' Mutual General Insurance Association Limited. I don't know if the young ladies behind the shop counters pay their "dues" by cheque, but if so they must be hard put to it to compress National Amalgamated Union of Shop Assistants, Warehousemen and Clerks into 3¼ inches; and I regard myself fortunate, if only in this respect, that I do not live in an area whose "juice" is supplied by The London and Home Counties Joint Electricity Authority. But I do have to write now and again to the Divisional Petroleum Officer, Divisional Petroleum Office, South-Eastern Division, The Pump Room, Tunbridge Wells, Kent. I can't help feeling that the Divisional Petroleum Officer, Tunbridge Wells, should suffice. Economy is a good watchword in wartime—economy in words as well as in things.

OUTSIDE your local cinema this week you may see an announcement of Desert Victory, the film of the recent Libyan campaign shot by Army Film and Photographic Unit and the R.A.F. Film Unit cameramen; it should be worth seeing. Major David MacDonald, who was in charge of the A.F.P.U. in Libya, brought back to this country over 40,000 feet of film, which has now been knocked into shape by the technicians at Pinewood Studios. Associated with Major MacDonald in this work have been Capt. Roy Boulting, who directed Thunder Rock; Lieut. Jenkins, Asst.-Director for London Films at Denham; and Sergeant Best, Asst. Editor of many peacetime productions at Pinewood Studios. An indication of the way in which the 30-odd cameramen of the A.F.P.U. kept up with the advance is evidenced by the fact that Capt. Geoffrey Keating and four sergeants of the Unit were in Tobruk for over an hour before the 8th Army occupied the town; their photograph of the hauling down of the swastika flag and the hoisting of the Union Jack in its place is one of the high-lights of Desert Victory.

AT this very moment (Mrs. Amabel Williams-Ellis reminds us in her little book Women in War Factories; Gollancz, 1s.) women are driving great steam hammers and travelling cranes, making the absurd barrage balloons reel and sing as they tape them, measuring and weighing, dipping something into a bath of boiling tin to test it, working with a pair of pliers screwed up in a gun-turret or the tail of a plane. They are also dishing out the soup in the canteens, travelling through the black-out, getting the worst of their housework done before they go to the factory. As Mrs. Williams-Ellis only too truly remarks, we, the general public, are not bothering our heads any too much about that great army shut away at their work behind the high walls or the electrified wire fences of the war factories and workshops. Yet these men and women "have stuck it for more than three years, and have done a job such as has never been done before in all history." We ought to know more about them and their work; Women in War Factories will help to fill a gap in our knowledge of which we ought to be ashamed.

London Salutes the Ever-Glorious Red Army



IN THE ALBERT HALL on Feb. 21, 1943 an impressive pageant marked London's celebration of the 25th Anniversary of the Red Army. This photograph shows the vast assembly during the spectacular finale. On the platform the principal speaker, Mr. Eden, is seen in the centre. On either side, on the pedestals, are the narrators, Lt.-Cmdr. Ralph Richardson and Dame Sybil Thorndike. The huge backcloth represents a modern Russian city; and in front of the Soviet flag stands a Russian soldier on guard. *Photo, The Times*

Printed in England and published every alternate Friday by the Proprietors, THE AMALGAMATED PRESS, LTD., The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. Registered for transmission by Canadian Magazine Post. Sole Agents for Australia and New Zealand: Messrs. Gordon & Gotch, Ltd.; and for South Africa: Central News Agency, Ltd.—March 19th, 1943. S.S. *Editorial Address:* JOHN CARPENTER HOUSE WHITEFRIARS, LONDON E.C.4.